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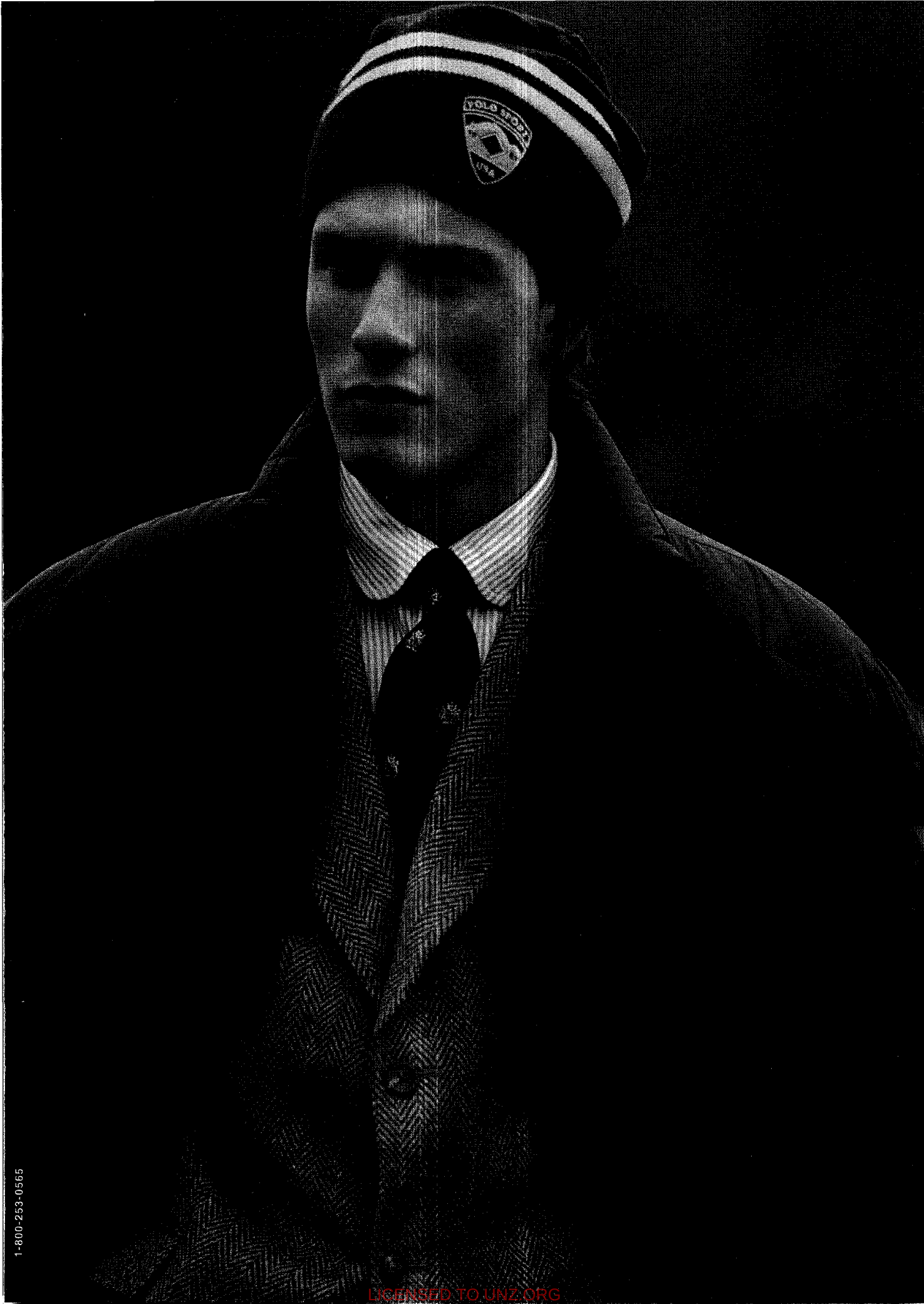


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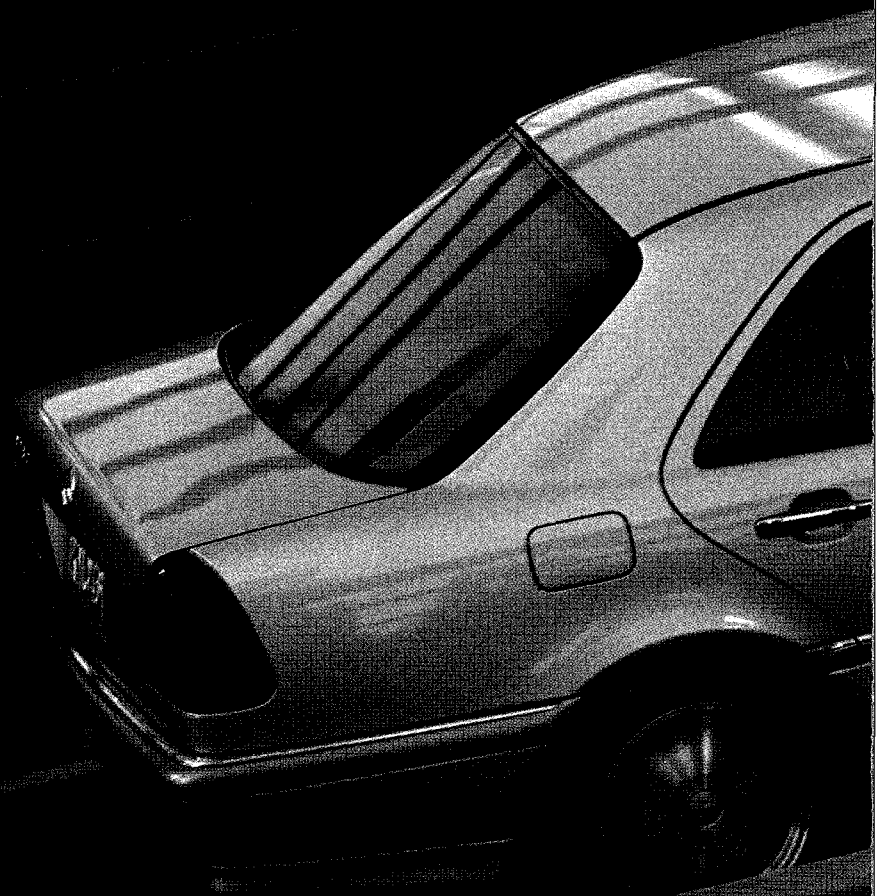


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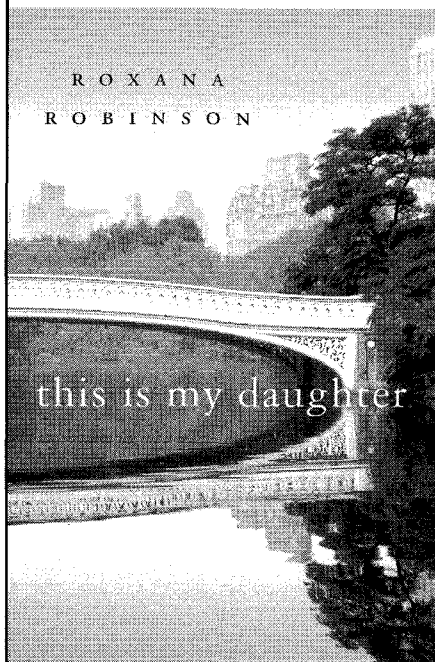


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THE NEW YORKER

SEPTEMBER 7, 1998

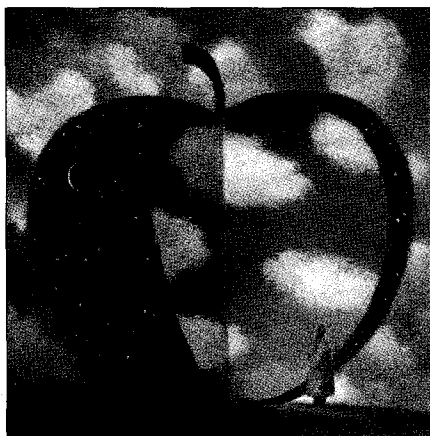
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DECLINE AND FALL

Russia's President is hanging on at the cost of his nation's welfare.

THE epic of Boris Yeltsin's political life has reached so many seeming dénouements over the years that it long ago acquired the disorienting texture of a novel by a postmodernist like Italo Calvino or Julio Cortázar—a story in which, again and again, the words "The End" are followed by yet another horrible episode, on and on, into eternity.

Last Thursday—a day when Yeltsin was rumored to be negotiating immunity from prosecution for himself in exchange for sharing power, and ordinary Russians were desperately trying to buy whatever dollars were left in the country as a hedge against the ruble's free fall—*Kommersant*, one of the leading Moscow dailies, put an enormous, blunt headline on its front page: "ON ZHIV"; that is, "HE'S ALIVE." The headline ran above a photograph in which the Russian President looked like the handiwork of a semi-skilled taxidermist. The paper's point was that perhaps the only thing about the current regime a Russian can be sure of is that the President's heart and lungs are functioning, if barely.

Like Bill Clinton's sexual escapades, Boris Yeltsin's senescence—the health crises, the drinking binges, the extended holidays, the beery pronouncements on state occasions—is easy fodder for jokes. But, while no people on earth have a

keener sense of fatalistic irony than the Russians, they long ago stopped finding Yeltsin amusing. History, this time, has unfolded first as farce and then as tragedy. It is painful now to remember the late-summer nights of seven years ago: the pratfall of a slapstick coup d'état; couples along Kutuzovsky Prospect throwing red carnations at the tanks as they rumbled back out of Moscow to their bases; fireworks rising in primary colors over the Moscow River; enormous throngs joining parades outside the Kremlin that were, at long last, expressions of real joy, and not the stage-managed kitsch of Stalinist May Days. To be sure, few reports from the "new Russia" didn't include some version of the caveat "Now comes the hard part." No one with a sense of history could fail to see that building a modern democracy after centuries of pathological absolutism, empire, and violence would require almost superhuman endurance and imagination. And yet to be there was to feel alive—to witness, at least, a liberal promise after centuries of illiberalism and suffering.

As it has turned out, though, a man who helped smash the Communist state with a politics of courage and populism has dashed his career—and, far more important, the promise of an era—on a politics of cowardice and isolation.

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For the first time since the collapse of the Soviet state, hyperinflation, and even wide-scale civil disorder, threaten to uproot the seedlings of civil society from the Russian earth.

So what happened? In 1992, under the rubric of ideological rivalry, Yeltsin and the Communist-dominated Duma contrived to slap together an economy that eventually became the biggest pyramid scheme since Cheops. Yeltsin and his circle of bookish free-market advisers knew that in order to create the basis for a market economy they needed not only to liberalize prices (which they did do) but also to endure the bankruptcies of oversubsidized and inefficient state industries and to legislate land reform, effective tax collection, and much else. When the pain of price rises led to the fall of Yeltsin's young aides, though, the President brought in as prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, whose blocky carriage and old-guard instincts reminded one of a precinct captain in an outer-borough clubhouse. Chernomyrdin chose a surface stability that disguised the country's need for structural changes. In the meantime, the Duma refused to pass further market reforms, condemning them as the theories of heartless academics, cynical Western governments, and predatory international agencies.

While production foundered and businesses and individuals indulged in a pattern of universal tax evasion, the new Russia supported its outward stability on the same basis as the old Soviet Union had: it floated on a slick sea of profits from the oil and gas industries. Chernomyrdin held off inflation and financed the budget deficit first by stalling on paying salaries and later by setting up a dangerous game of selling short-term, high-yield bonds: when the bonds came due, the government just sold more debt.

At the same time, a few agile (and often shady) businessmen had established wildly profitable banks in Moscow, thereby giving rise to a group of tycoons, whose flamboyance infuriated the citizenry no less than the old Communist bureaucrats had. A coal miner in Siberia who had not been paid in a year could hardly be expected to share in the joy of a small class of lucky people who had learned the pleasures of yachting off Corfu and thousand-dollar-a-night

hookers. A middle class, meanwhile, was slow to come into being. And so, with increasing accuracy, a majority of the population began to associate "democracy" with political arrogance, and "capitalism" with outright criminality, both in the Kremlin and on the street.

By December, 1994, Yeltsin's isolation had turned to paranoia, and that, in turn, led to bloodshed. Threatened by the unlovely Chechen independence movement, Yeltsin reacted in a paroxysm of rage. Following the idiotic advice of his cronies and generals, he sent the Army south into a war that butchered tens of thousands of people, levelled the city of Grozny, and further depleted the state's budget and the nation's will. Yeltsin's moral authority (or what was left of it) had become as exhausted as his heart tissue.

In 1996, with Yeltsin's popularity rating down to four per cent, a circle of wealthy bankers—the Magnificent Seven, or the Moscow oligarchs, as they are alternately known—slyly offered to bankroll his election campaign against a Communist opponent. After Yeltsin won, the oligarchs collected their reward: carte blanche to buy up oil and gas companies and other state industries at bargain prices. At the same time, the tycoons solidified their hold on national politics by creating their own media empires.

Later, Yeltsin's more liberal advisers considered waging battle against the tycoons and holding fair auctions for state enterprises. The conflicts between

the advisers and the tycoons, however, resulted only in stalemate and palace intrigue. Last March, fearing that his prime minister was assuming too much personal power, Yeltsin dismissed Chernomyrdin and replaced him with a young technocratic reformer named Sergei Kiriyenko. But then when the financial crisis hit—when the "Asian flu" floated west across the steppe, with oil prices cratering and the pyramid beginning to crumble—Yeltsin dumped Kiriyenko for Chernomyrdin.

The spectacle of Yeltsin's disintegration—his erratic gestures and misbegotten policies—is pathetic. The Communist leader, Gennadi Zyuganov, claims that Yeltsin is no longer able to read a document, much less write one. While the financial crisis was developing during the summer, Yeltsin simply refused to break off a five-week vacation: as the papers and the streets rang with alarm, he complained first of the weather, then of the fishing. Last Friday, in the most stumbling language, he said that he would not step down before 2000, and that he was ready to meet with Clinton in Moscow, as scheduled.

Yeltsin's accomplishments are historic: his role in the events of 1991, his treaties with old foreign enemies, his periodic embrace of democratic principles and institutions. But if he has any chance at all of salvaging at least a mixed reputation in history, it will be because he has finally mustered the sense to bring his story to a close. Enough. The end. —DAVID REMNICK



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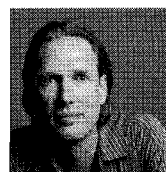
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ROZ CHAST (Drawing, p. 75) has published more than six hundred drawings in *The New Yorker*. She is the illustrator of the children’s book “Meet My Staff,” coming out next month.

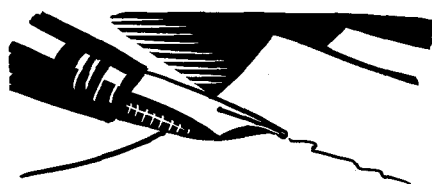
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MARK ALAN STAMATY (“Monica in Medialand,” p. 52) is the creator of several comic strips, including “Washington,” and has written four children’s books. ♦

THE MAIL



THE ROOTS OF PERJURY

In reviewing the prospects for a perjury case against President Clinton, Jeffrey Rosen ("The Perjury Trap," August 10th) does not mention the Biblical injunction against perjury: "You shall not bear false witness *against your neighbor*." In other words, in Biblical times, perjury was an offense against another person. In modern times, however, the courts have viewed perjury principally as an offense against the government—as an assault on its administration of justice—and so the crime of perjury includes a witness's lying under oath about his own conduct. This distinction between legal and Biblical notions of perjury is important, for two reasons. It helps explain the American public's seeming indifference to the possibility that the President lied under oath about his private behavior with Monica Lewinsky, since most Americans' appreciation of what is wrong with perjury derives from the Biblical commandment. And it brings into sharp relief a prosecutorial tactic which is related to the perjury trap that Rosen describes: prosecutors (of both the special and the regular variety) will bring an accomplice before a grand jury, extract a perjured statement denying his involvement in a crime, and then offer him leniency in exchange for cooperation in implicating a higher-up—thereby creating an incentive for the witness to give false testimony about his "neighbor." Ironically, a commandment that was originally a shield for the accused has been turned into a sword for the prosecution.

MAX GITTER
New York City

LITERARY COMPETITION—I

Paul Theroux's disdain for almost everyone except himself has become so predictable that his coyly vicious article about V. S. Naipaul came as no surprise ("The Enigma of Friendship," August 3rd). Despite Theroux's report

that he felt excited at taking Naipaul's rejection of him "on the chin and moving on," the article proves that he has done anything but. In fact, he has returned with a left to the nose and a right to the gut. Naipaul did well to walk away: a death blow was sure to follow.

ALEXANDRA DUNDAS TODD
Boston, Mass.

Regarding "The Enigma of Friendship": As the old saying goes, "you suffer more from friends than from enemies."

ROBERT SCHRYNEMAKERS
Torrance, Calif.

LITERARY COMPETITION—II

It would appear that almost no one had anything good to say about the Modern Library's list of the hundred best novels of the twentieth century written in English (Comment, by Louis Menand, August 3rd, and The Talk of the Town, by William Styron, August 17th). I was particularly struck by one inference that could be made from Mr. Menand's article: that because the list was composed mainly by old men to appeal to old men (and white men at that) the entire effort is suspect. But to evaluate greatness we need to consider a novel's lasting power and its effects on its time and on other writers—and it takes years to evaluate lasting impact. So it may be that older people are in the best position to make such a list. This may be a case in which Father really does know best.

MAXWELL S. CHARLESTON
Olney, Md.

Mr. Styron tells us that if we are exasperated by the Modern Library's list of the hundred best novels we might take heart from a list drawn up by a more politically correct crowd. I, however, take heart from an entirely un-P.C. list, but one that's just as valid and much more enjoyable: mine.

NIX HIPPIE
Little Rock, Ark.

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THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

CANDIDA—The Pearl Theatre Company begins the season with Shaw's 1903 play about marriage. Clare Davidson is the director. In previews. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

CULTURE OF DESIRE—The life of Andy Warhol and Dante's "Inferno" inspired the director Anne Bogart's play, her second installment in the Saratoga International Theatre Institute's two-part examination of American popular culture. In previews. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)

THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE LOWER EAST SIDE—En Garde Arts continues its tradition of site-specific stagings with an evening of commissioned one-acts ("The Patron Saint of the Nameless Dead," by Carlos Murillo; "New Culture for a New Country," by Alice Tuan; and "Hester Street Hideaway: A Lower East Side Love Story," by Peter Ullian), performed on the roof of Seward Park High School and accompanied by a chorus of Lower East Siders and Seward Park students. Directed by Matt Wilder. Previews begin Sept. 8. (350 Grand St., at Essex St. 279-4200.)

THEY STILL MAMBO IN HAVANA—A political drama by Rogelio Martinez, in which Cuban exiles attempt to return home. Opens Sept. 4 at 7:30. (The Flea, 41 White St., between Broadway and Church St. 226-0051.)

OPENED RECENTLY

ART—Yasmina Reza's farce is a splendid vehicle for three actors (Brian Cox, Henry Goodman, and David Haig) who portray friends whose fifteen-year relationship is threatened when one of them buys a large white canvas for two hundred thousand francs. Directed by Matthew Warchus. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/23/98.) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE—The precocious Anglo-Irish playwright Martin McDonagh's riveting winter's tale, set in a rural Irish cottage, about an aged mother and her virgin forty-year-old daughter, who is trapped in a punishing solitude. It's a simple, primitive story, yet it is filled with complex emotional surprises and reversals. (3/16/98) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

BLACK MASK—Damon Kiely and Frank Bradley's noir thriller about a lonely private dick looking for love. (St. Mark's In-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650. Closes Sept. 13.)

BREAD AND BUTTER—Playwrights Theatre presents Eugene O'Neill's early play, as part of a festival examining the playwright's oeuvre. (Provincetown Playhouse, 133 MacDougal St. 279-4200. Closes Sept. 11.)

CABARET—A mesmerizing production of the Kander and Ebb musical. Here, the dancers at the Kit Kat Klub, the symbol of anything-goes Weimar Germany, look shell-shocked and stigmatized. As the Emcee, Alan Cumming is astonishing. Jennifer Jason Leigh

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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has the role of Sally Bowles. Directed by Sam Mendes. (4/6/98) (Kit Kat Klub, 124 W. 43rd St. 719-1300.)

CAPITOL STEPS—The troupe of former congressional aides and interns presents its latest political-comedy revue, "Unzippin' My Doo-Dah and Other National Priorities." (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. Closes Sept. 5.)

COLIN QUINN: AN IRISH WAKE—The "Saturday Night Live" star's multicharacter one-man show was inspired by the Brooklyn neighborhood he lived in during the seventies. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Closes Sept. 19.)

COLLECTED STORIES—In a splendid performance, Uta Hagen plays an aging writer who tells her protégée (Lorca Simons) the one story about her own life which she hasn't written. Complications, naturally, ensue. Unfortunately, other than providing a showcase for Ms. Hagen, this revival of Donald Margulies's 1997 drama only points out how poorly constructed the relationship between the two women is, and it is made even less believable by Ms. Simons' overly mannered, pouty acting. Directed by William Carden, with a marvellous, airy set by Ray Recht. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

COMMUNICATING DOORS—A delightful farce with a fairy-tale ending, by Alan Ayckbourn. As with all good farce, the central conceit is serious and quite ridiculous at the same time; in this case, it involves murder and time travel. An exuberant cast, led by the wittily unflappable Patricia Hodges and including Mary-Louise Parker and David McCallum, makes the most of David Gallo's lovely set (which has six doors, good for slamming, hiding behind, and hitting miscreants with). Christopher Ashley's direction makes the precise framework of the plot clear without ever dampening the high spirits. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 13th St. 239-6200.)

DEEP DOWN—Ruben Santiago-Hudson stars in a drama by Doug Grissom, set in the South in 1963, about a black ex-convict and his white employer. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 935-9430, ext. 10. Closes Sept. 14.)

DINAH WAS—Oliver Goldstick's play about the late blues singer Dinah Washington, starring Lillias White. (Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100.)

HUNDREDS OF SISTERS & ONE BIG BROTHER—A one-woman show by Deborah Swisher, about her black-Jewish childhood in a Berkeley

commune. Sept. 2 at 8. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

IF I WERE YOU—3-Legged Dog's latest multimedia production, a crime story incorporating elements of English farce and French melodrama. Sept. 2-5 at 8. Continues through Sept. 12. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793.)

THE IRISH... AND HOW THEY GOT THAT WAY—This revue by Frank McCourt, author of the best-selling memoir "Angela's Ashes," is a generally good-natured if somewhat choppy amalgam of historical tidbits, quotations from letters and speeches, and Irish songs from the past two centuries. (Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

JEAN COCTEAU REP—The company opens the season with Sartre's "No Exit." (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

NIJINSKY SPEAKS—A one-man memory play, written and performed by Leonard Crofoot, in which the celebrated dancer looks back on his life from the confines of an insane asylum. (Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

NUNSENSE A-MEN—An all-male version of Dan Goggin's 1985 musical comedy, "Nunsense." (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

PLAYSTATION, LEVELS 1-4—Judy Elkan's comedy examines the days and nights of three downtown glamour girls. (Excellent Art Manufacturing, 86 Forsyth St. 414-5167.)

POWER PLAYS—Three short plays, two written by Elaine May and one by Alan Arkin, who perform them with Jeannie Berlin and Anthony Arkin, their respective offspring. All of the plays are too long, but the comic brilliance of May and Arkin père (who also directed) is worth, at a rough estimate, ten million times the price of admission. Presented by Manhattan Theatre Club. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

SAKINA'S RESTAURANT—Aasif Mandvi portrays six characters in his one-man exploration of the South Asian community in New York. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

SIDE MAN—The Roundabout Theatre presents Warren Leight's drama, which was staged earlier this year Off Broadway. It's a nostalgic but never sappy paean to the musical obsessiveness and worldly indifference of mid-century big-band musicians, cleverly structured as the recollections of one musician's put-upon son. Solidly directed by Michael Mayer. (Broadway at 45th St. 719-1300. Closes Sept. 6.)

SMOKE ON THE MOUNTAIN—In this sweet and funny musical comedy, set on a Saturday night in June, 1938, the Mount Pleasant (North Carolina) Baptist Church awaits the arrival of the Sanders Family singers and musicians. The show features Mike Craver and Mark Hardwick's tuneful, often bluegrass arrangements of songs like "Bringing in the Sheaves," "I'll Fly Away," and "Rock of Ages." (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

THE SOUND OF MUSIC—Rebecca Luker is enormously winning as Maria, and the seven children in the cast are mostly delightful,

but the production doesn't linger in the memory; there may be music in those hills, but the producers didn't seem to find a whole lot of fresh air up there. (4/6/98) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

STUPID KIDS—The WPA Theatre's production of John C. Russell's dark comedy of suburban-teen angst. Michael Mayer is the director. (Century Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE—Abstract puppets underwater, set to the music of Berlioz. This isn't rubber-duckie performance art; just as dance can make space a palpable presence onstage, the show's creator, Basil Twist, uses feathers, streamers, mirrors, bubbles, and sophisticated lighting to do the same for water. And, as in dance, the movement illuminates the music. A peerless, delightful summer evening. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

THE TRAMWAY END—A drama by the Irish playwright Dermot Bolger, originally seen at Dublin's Gate Theatre, about an Irish expatriate living in Germany. (Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. 388-2806. Closes Sept. 27.)

VILLA VILLA—Theatre as mosh pit. The Argentinean troupe De La Guarda herds you into a crowded space, performs undistinguished rock music, swings on ropes over your head, and splashes you until you're drenched. (Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200.)

WHEN I WAS A GIRL, I USED TO SCREAM AND SHOUT—A dark coming-of-age comedy by Sharman Macdonald, set in Scotland in the fifties and sixties. (John Montgomery, 134 W. 26th St. 627-7076. Closes Sept. 4.)

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TOLD—A drama about an urban, middle-class black family touched by sexual abuse, written by Anne L. Thompson-Screching. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. ... **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES**: Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. ... **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK**: Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. ... **CATS**: Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. ... **CHICAGO**: Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. ... **THE FANTASTICKS**: Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. ... **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!**: Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. ... **GROSS INDECENCY: THE THREE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE**: Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. (Closes Sept. 13.) ... **HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH**: Jane Street Theatre, Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. 239-6200. ... **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE**: Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. ... **JEKYLL & HYDE**: Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. ... **LATE-NITE CATECHISM**: St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. ... **THE LION KING**: New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. ... **LES MISÉRABLES**: Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. ... **MISS SAIGON**: Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. ... **PERFECT CRIME**: Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. ... **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA**: Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. ... **RAGTIME**: Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. ... **R&J**: John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 354-2220. ... **RENT**: Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. ... **THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL**: Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. ... **SECRETS EVERY SMART TRAVELER SHOULD KNOW**: Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599. ... **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ**: Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. ... **STOMP**: Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. ... **TITANIC**: Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100. ... **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING**: St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. ... **VISITING MR. GREEN**: Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 505-0700.

DANCE

"DREAM ANALYSIS"—The prolific choreographer Mark Dendy came up with his fifteen-character, full-length Freudian dance comedy after he stumbled upon a New Age workbook for artists who are stuck. "One of the assignments was to write three pages a day. I thought, I'm an artist. I don't need to make collages! But I did it." The result—a rollicking sendup of the memoir form which includes duelling Martha Grahams and twin Nijinskys, four plot lines, and the free-wheeling logic of dreams—premiered this past January at the Altogether Different festival and opens the fall season at Dance Theatre Workshop. "It still awes me," says Dendy, a onetime resident of Weaverville, North Carolina. "I mean, what would Mom even think?" (219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Sept. 1-5 at 8 and Sept. 6 at 3. Through Sept. 12.)

JOHN CAGE TRIBUTE—This much is sure: on Saturday, fans of the master of randomness gather to mark the eighty-sixth anniversary of his birth. What they will do to mark it is, of course, uncertain, although many have been invited to read from and perform their favorite Cage text (as he once said, "I am here, and there is nothing to say"). Nevertheless, dancers are sure to be in attendance, including many Cunningham veterans, and they are unlikely to be shy in expressing their fondness for the writer and composer, between the readings, with outpourings of dance. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Sept. 5 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

act: these kids can play. Live, they have a professional polish that suggests a bright future. (Jones Beach Theatre. 516-221-1000. Sept. 2 and Sept. 5 at 8.)

SUFFRAGETTE SESSIONS TOUR—And you thought that Lilith Fair had cornered the market on estrogen. This evening of unadulterated girl power features Amy Ray and Emily Saliers (the Indigo Girls), Kate Schellenbach (of Luscious Jackson), Josephine Wiggs (formerly of the Breeders), Thalia Zedek (of Come), and several fine solo artists, including Lisa Germano and Jane Siberry. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Sept. 3 at 7:30.)

CHARLIE DANIELS BAND AND MOLLY HATCHET—Southern rock invades Long Island. (Westbury Music Fair. 516-334-0800. Sept. 3 at 8.)

CELINE DION—Can eighteen million people be wrong? Thanks to a fortuitous ride on the "Titanic" juggernaut and to a voice capable of sending icebergs fleeing in terror, this iron-lunged, chest-pounding, French-Canadian microphone hog is now the most successful recording artist of the past two years. And her reign just looks to go on and on. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Sept. 3-4 at 8.)

SALSA FESTIVAL—The twenty-third annual rhythm extravaganza. Born in Puerto Rico and raised in the South Bronx, India is, along with her label mate Marc Anthony, a major part of the Latin new wave that has invigorated salsa with an urban sting. Live, she's a beautiful, riveting presence, and her backup band burns hotter than the cigars she loves to puff on. Eddie Palmieri's fervent hard-bop and salsa-inflected rhythms don't always translate onstage, where the pianist tends to grandstand, but when the



Shannon Burkett, Mandy Siegfried, Keith Nobbs, and James Carpinello, in "Stupid Kids."

PILAR RIOJA—The contessa of Spanish dance returns for her twenty-sixth season with a program rich in works inspired by Federico Garcia Lorca to celebrate the centennial of his birth. (Repertorio Español, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Sept. 2-3 and Sept. 6 at 7, Sept. 4 at 8, and Sept. 5 and Sept. 7 at 3.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

BACKSTREET BOYS—The teenybopper singing group that makes thinking people everywhere wax nostalgic for New Kids on the Block. (Nassau Coliseum. 516-794-9300. Sept. 2 at 7:30.)

HANSON—Unfettered by acne, cracking voices, or the inevitable urge to go solo, the brothers Hanson soldier on. They're no novelty

pieces do fall together, it's a smoker. Also with Tito Rojas, El Gran Combo, and Elvis Crespo. (Madison Square Garden. Sept. 5 at 8.)

WYNNONA—Née Judd, singing country songs in the round. (Westbury Music Fair. 516-334-0800. Sept. 8 at 8.)

PEARL JAM—Talk about a market correction. These grunge trailblazers, once the country's most popular band, now exist in commercial limbo; the group's latest record, "Yield," isn't even in the Top 100. But the experience has been oddly positive: the infamous Eddie Vedder bombast has a new, humble edge, and, onstage at least, the band is as easy to ignore as a hurricane. (Continental Airlines Arena, the Meadowlands. 212-307-7171. Sept. 8 at 8.)

NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS—The godfather of goth brings his expressionistic travelling circus to the Upper West Side. Those not fa-

miliar with Cave's sepulchral croon might remember his appearance in Wim Wenders's "Wings of Desire." Like the film, he's a stylish oddity and very much worth seeing. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Sept. 8 at 8.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

BLARNEY STAR, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Home to fine Irish music every Friday night.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Sept. 2: The a-cappella funk of the **HOUSE JACKS**. Sept. 3: **FRANK LONDON'S HASIDIC NEW WAVE**.

DOWNTIME, 251 W. 30th St. (695-2747)—A friendly split-level bar with a dazzling quasi-Cubist paint job and an above-average pool table.

FEZ, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

IDLEWILD, 145 E. Houston St. (477-5005)—You can commiserate about the airline industry's war on budget travellers while enjoying plenty of legroom at this sleek ode to the golden age of jet travel. A bright white fibre-glass boarding ramp leads you up to an airplane interior where topflight d.j.s take the place of tinny plastic headphones and sexy stewardess uniforms are back in fashion. The details—real coach seats converted into booths, turbulence-proof cocktail glasses—stop short of being too cute, and the mix of passengers is appealingly international.

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—Home of the Swing Dance Society, which gathers here every Sunday, with sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

KNITTING FACTORY, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Sept. 3: Straight out of Portland, Oregon, the indie rock of the **SPINANES**. Also on Sept. 3, the **LONESOME ORGANIST**, a.k.a. Jeremy Jacobsen, plays the organ, piano, drums, guitar, vibraphone, and marimba. Sept. 4: **MAGNETIC FIELDS**.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—Sept. 2: The hard-drinking rock of **COMMANDER CODY** and his **LOST PLANET AIRMEN** ("Hot Rod Lincoln," "Lost in the Ozone"). Sept. 3: Guitarist **HIRAM BULLOCK** and bassist **WILL LEE**.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-0406)—Sept. 2: The **SPINANES** and the **LONESOME ORGANIST** (see the Knitting Factory). **EL VEZ**, "the Mexican Elvis," is your host on Sept. 5. Señor Vez is far more than your run-of-the-mill Elvis impersonator: he claims to be the illegitimate man-child of the King and Charo. He sings in Spanish and wears a layered outfit that he slowly unpeels and tosses into the audience. Viva Las Vegas, indeed.

LES POULETS, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and now and then, a cha-cha. Dining.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. Sept. 3: **BASEMENT BHANGRA**, an evening of ecstatic, futuristic dance music which fuses an ancient Punjabi harvest festival with the technological wonders of underground London. The d.j.s Rekkha and Joy spice the infectious *dohl* drumbeat with pinches of classical raga, old-school hip-hop, dub reggae, and the occasional Malcolm X outburst or car crash. The frenetic but friendly dance floor is awl with turbans and saris, and Indian film clips are projected as a backdrop. This

monthly party makes your average world-music event seem as bland as Esperanto. Sept. 8: One of reggae's prime poets, **MUTABARUKA** fuses political issues with witty, slightly mad homilies rendered over engaging arrangements. He is blessed with an authoritative, conversational voice, and the shock of white hair smack-dab in the center of his dreadlocked dome makes him an imposing figure onstage. Dining.

TRAMPS, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Sept. 6: **EL VEZ** (see Maxwell's).

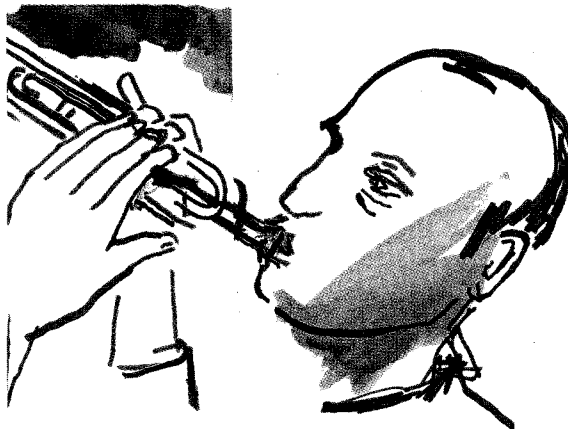
JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Sept. 8: **MARY CLEERE HARAN** begins a five-week engagement. Dining.

BIRDLAND, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Sept. 2: **BRIAN LYNCH**, an extroverted trumpeter with a wide-open sound, has beefed up the bands of everyone from Phil Woods to Eddie Palmieri. In an unpredictable world, Lynch's whirlwind bop is a sure thing. Sept. 3-6: The **CEDAR WALTON** trio. Pianist Walton has a touch of Clark Kent, a touch of Superman; beneath his mild-mannered surface is a jazzman of steely power and intelligence. He's also a terrific composer and an exacting bandleader. With a trio, his refined improvising ought to gleam. Sept. 7: The **TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI JAZZ ORCHESTRA**. Sept. 8: **BOBBY WATSON'S TAILOR-MADE BIG BAND**. When he gets the chance, Bobby Watson, the resourceful altoist, composer, and arranger, loves to assemble a big band; they're occasions that you wish would come along more often. Watson knows what makes a band swing—tight arrangements, memorable compositions, and a diehard commitment to rhythm. The energy and infectious groove of Watson's groups seem to emanate from the leader's upbeat playing: imagine Louis Jordan with a bebop heart. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Railing against the watery pop-jazz of **SPYRO GYRA** (through Sept. 6) is sort of like attacking tofu: you can't hate something that's hardly there. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Pianist **PETER MINTUN** is in charge at Bemelmans Bar through Oct. 10. A genuine throwback to a gentler time, this elegant performer specializes in curios from the twenties and thirties. Agreeable and reassuring without being over-gracious, he's sort of a curio himself.



Dave Douglas, at Iridium.

CITRON 47, at 401 W. 47th St. (379-4747)—A comfy living-room bistro in Hell's Kitchen. The **CHUCK WILSON** quartet is out to show that Monday nights aren't just for big bands. Swing saxophonist Wilson's chamber-jazz foursome includes guitarist **HOWARD ALDEN**, a master of pre-bop idioms, trombonist **JOEL HELLENY**, and bassist **MURRAY WALL**. The Brazilian percussionist **CAFE** leads his own eclectic group on Tuesdays. Dining.

COVE RESTAURANT, 2 South End Ave., Battery Park City (964-1500)—The Microscopic Septet is now a fond memory, but its former pianist, **JOEL FORRESTER**, has bounced back

nicely. This delightfully eclectic stylist and composer turns a regular Tuesday-and-Thursday-night engagement into a showcase for one man's parallel musical universe. Special guests are also promised.

IRIDIUM, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Sept. 6: The **FREDDY COLE** quintet. Starting Sept. 8: Consider the thought that trumpeter **DAVE DOUGLAS** might actually be the Wynton Marsalis figure we've always needed and deserved. Douglas is a virtuosic horn player who loves music—all music, it seems—and he's happy to let his myriad passions show directly in his work. He takes on free jazz, traditional jazz, Eastern European music, classical Indian idioms, electronic experimentation, and Burt Bacharach tunes (that's just the beginning) and makes it all work with an inclusive attitude backed up by solid and inspired musicianship. Douglas bridges the gap between tradition and innovation, and his music is always engaging and often glorious. His ensemble for this engagement is the fierce, pianoless quartet he recently put together, which features the compelling saxophonist **CHRIS POTTER** and the slamming rhythm team of bassist **JAMES GENUS** and drummer **BILLY DRUMMOND**. Mondays belong to electric-guitar innovator **LES PAUL**.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, and a piano. Sept. 2-5: The dapper, easygoing pianist **RONNY WHITE** holds forth, accompanied by bassist **BOOTS MALESON**.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A plush, Art Deco shrine, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. Starting Sept. 8: The veteran songwriter and keyboardist **JIMMY WEBB**, whose hit-filled catalogue includes such far-afield classics as "Up, Up and Away," "By the Time I Get to Phoenix," and the gloriously inscrutable "MacArthur Park." ... Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Hilary Kole. Closed Mondays.

RED BLAZER, 32 W. 37th St. (262-3112)—Thursdays belong to Stan Rubin's big band, Fridays to the Big Apple Jazz Band, with Dick Voigt, and Saturdays to the Bob Cantwell quintet.

SARDI'S, 234 W. 44th St. (221-8444)—The **JOHN MALINO BAND** swings on Fridays.

SUPPER CLUB, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Sept. 4: The **FLIPPED FEDORAS** pay a big-band tribute to Louis Prima.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A jazz outpost where the musicians are always top-shelf. Through Sept. 6: The **VINCENT HERRING** quartet. Herring, a vicious player who may come closer than anyone to capturing Cannonball Adderley's bounding spirit, has lately been asserting his own highly charged personality. Dining.

TONIC, 107 Norfolk St. (358-7503)—The same intelligence and drive that the bassist **DREW GRESS** (Sept. 2) brings to such diverse units as the Fred Hersch trio, the new-jazz ensemble Hydra, and his own inventive band, Jagged Sky, are sure to be on display as he plays with saxophonist **TIM BERNE**, pianist **URI CAINE**, and drummer **JIM BLACK**. Sept. 3: A downtown supergroup, or three old buddies getting together for some fun? Either way, a trio made up of saxophonist **NED ROTHENBERG**, drummer **BOBBY PREVITE**, and guitarist **MARC RIBOT** has the chops, the imagination, and the wit to make this encounter something special.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—As a card-carrying devotee of Bud Powell, you'd expect the veteran pianist **BARRY HARRIS** (in through Sept. 6) to spin out feverish, high-velocity lines. Instead, this bebop proselytizer takes his time, lolling in the laconic poetry of the music rather than in its athleticism. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

KAREN CALDICOTT

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Edward Burne-Jones: Victorian Artist-Dreamer," a splendid survey devoted to this preeminent Pre-Raphaelite. The exhibition includes paintings, works on paper, books, stained glass, and tapestries that Burne-Jones executed in collaboration with his friend William Morris. The show reanimates this long-unfashionable painter. Through Sept. 6. . . . ¶ "Ellsworth Kelly on the Roof." Through late fall. . . . ¶ "The Direct Eye," a small and unassuming show devoted to the interplay between self-taught and mainstream artists in twentieth-century art, includes works by Horace Pippin, Max Weber, and Alison Saar. One is struck by how many formally trained artists in this group strive for sometimes cloying effects of naïveté. On the other hand, the stringently reduced forms in a drawing by Bill Traylor—a former slave who began painting late in life—seem far more in tune with the "mainstream" achievements of art in this century. Altogether, an agreeable, if rather confused, selection. Through Oct. 18. . . . ¶ The French designer Jean Dunand (1877-1942) richly deserves the moniker the Met has bestowed on him in this mini-retrospective: "Master of Art Deco." When Scott Fitzgerald said wistfully that he loved the world when it twinkles, he might have been thinking of Dunand's stunning screens created for the salon of Solomon Guggenheim, which depict angels falling from Heaven, in gilt lacquer speckled with mother-of-pearl and eggshell. The bedroom suite (in white lacquer and furry goatskin) that he designed for railroad magnate Templeton Crocker's penthouse apartment in San Francisco is the real-life inspiration for all those swanky interiors that Fred Astaire and Norma Shearer swivelled and glided through in the palmy days before anyone thought this style was camp. Through Oct. 25. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—For seemingly arbitrary reasons, Pierre Bonnard's genius has been reflexively measured against Picasso's, and found wanting. Proust, however, is closer to home, and this exquisite retrospective—the first here in thirty-four years—shows why: both the painter and the novelist turned the surface shimmer of bourgeois contentment into mysterious evocations of memory. Through Oct. 13. (See also Galleries—Uptown.) . . . ¶ "Love Forever: Yayoi Kusama, 1958-68." Like Yoko Ono, Kusama was a refugee from an affluent Japanese family who sought encouragement for her artistic ambitions in New York's avant-garde in the sixties. Kusama's early "infinity net" paintings found supporters in the masculine precincts ruled by such abstractionists as Donald Judd and Frank Stella, but the artist's more extreme, performance-oriented gestures—like appearing nude in many of her pieces—linked her with the radicals of that scene. In this show, which is strong on paintings, objects, and archival materials, Kusama looks like one of those seminal artists who was years ahead of her time. Some of this is due to a shift in art-world fashion, which is currently obsessed with gender, the body, and performance, but there is no

doubting the bravery of Kusama's achievement. (See also Galleries—Downtown.) Through Sept. 22. . . . ¶ "Tony Smith: Architect, Painter, Sculptor," a comprehensive retrospective devoted to an artist too often lumped with the Minimalists, largely due to his reliance on reductivist geometries in his black sculptures (several large ones have been installed in public places throughout the city, including, notably, Seagram Plaza, at Park Ave. and 52nd St.). Best known for these sculptures, Smith nevertheless worked

TABLES FOR TWO



PATOIS, 255 Smith St., Brooklyn (718-855-1535)—Who lives in Brooklyn? For a short answer, scan the clientele at Patois, a buzzing Carroll Gardens bistro that offers a T-shirted alternative to such hip Manhattan establishments as Odeon and Raoul's. Here longtime residents mix with Off Off Off Broadway types and new, fix-it-up homeowners in elbow-to-elbow appreciation of food that mirrors the virtues of the neighborhood: it's lusty, gutsy, and affordable.

Chef Alan Harding has managed to turn the restaurant's shortcomings—no wine cellar and a mini-kitchen stuck between the dining room and the back deck—into assets. "Chefs are always overcomplicating things," he says. "But when food is fresh and simple it sings." The unfussy French Mediterranean style he favors (mussels in garlic and beer, summer vegetable roulade on mint couscous) works especially well at the break-neck pace the place demands: the food gets to the table before the chef can get in the way. The wines, too, are priced to move. Skip the stuff on the menu and ask for the chalkboard reserve list, where some great finds—like Qupé Viognier or Pierre Fil Minervois—are often available at *vin de table* prices.

A word of warning: for the area, Patois is a fancy hangout, murmurous and congenial, but it's silly to hold comfort food to four-star standards. On the rare day when some small disaster does happen (a mushy side dish, an overcooked trout)—well, hey, even the Yankees lose sometimes. If you're seated on the deck, you'll have a nice view of the gargantuan tomatoes and runner beans growing in the garden next door, and if you're inside you can people-watch while you wait for dessert. The waiter will bring another chalkboard with a list of crumbly cobbblers and tarts Tatin, and, printed just below, perhaps the city's most honest choice of dessert wines: "Good Port...\$7, Great Port...\$9." (Open for dinner, Tuesday through Sunday, and for brunch on Sunday. Entrées, from \$11 to \$15.)

prolifically in painting, drawing, and modernist architecture, all of which are on display. But for all the breadth, this is a refreshingly tight and focussed exhibition, with relatively little fat to trim—it even manages the difficult task of situating Smith historically, as a figure straddling both the Abstract Expressionist and the Minimalist generations. Best of all, Philip Johnson's magnificent sculpture garden has been cleverly reinstalled with only Smith sculptures, mostly of medium scale, although the huge hit of last year's Chelsea gallery season,

"Moonodog" (1964), also puts in an appropriately monumental appearance. Through Sept. 22. . . . ¶ The impressive retrospective of Alexander Rodchenko (1891-1956) is valuable as much for its insights into the rise and decline of the Russian Revolution as for its art-historical contribution. A leader of the avant-garde in the twenties, Rodchenko was a founder of Constructivism, an early—and very witty—practitioner of photocollage, and a brilliant graphic designer. Through Oct. 6. . . . ¶ "David Goldblatt: Photographs

from South Africa" is a strangely understated series of black-and-white photographs taken in South Africa at the end of the apartheid era. A few of the images here, such as those documenting the squalid living conditions of black South Africans, are powerfully self-explanatory, but most of them occupy a curious middle ground between reportage and photography for art's sake. Through Oct. 6. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"The Art of the Motorcycle," a dazzling collection of a hundred and eleven bikes, from the late nineteenth century to the present. The installation, designed by Frank Gehry, is itself a work of art: the architect has faced the ramps of the rotunda with stainless steel, giving a hallucinatory shimmer to Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpiece. The show might be summarized in one word: bitchin'. Through Sept. 20. . . .

¶ It would be easy to dismiss the Danish painter Vilhelm Hammershøi (1864-1916) as a reactionary painter of genre scenes: the echoes of Vermeer and de Hooch in his gray, deserted streets and empty rooms are all too obvious. Yet Hammershøi is very much a man of his own time. A chilly, bare interior of an elegant baroque palace hall (1909) speaks of the dawning of conscious alienation in the early twentieth century as powerfully as the works of Hammershøi's contemporaries in Paris expressed the era's idealism. Through Sept. 7. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SoHo, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—"The Hugo Boss Prize, 1998." The lineup of finalists for the fifty-thousand-dollar award is multinational and multicultural: Douglas Gordon (the winner) from Scotland, Lorna Simpson from the United States, William Kentridge from South Africa, Lee Bul from South Korea, Pipilotti Rist from Switzerland, and Huang Yong Ping from China. Most of the work on view, however, is familiar enough to gallerygoers, and it seems considerably less transgressive than one might have imagined. The show does confirm certain trends in recent art: a vaguely politicized undercurrent and the continuing reliance on installation, film, and video. Through Sept. 20. . . . ¶ Four video installations ("Bronx," "Roma," "Liquid Crystals," and "Baroque Catholic Movements") by the Venetian artist Fabrizio Plessi. Through Sept. 13. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—"Blind Side," Liisa Roberts's new video installation, projects a sped-up, fixed-camera shot of a bland living-room interior onto a semitransparent scrim, and these images are vividly reflected on a mirror at the end of the gallery. The changing light of sunrise, day, sunset, and night whizzes past in a few minutes, and the whole gallery takes on a Wonderland

aura of ghostly impermanence. Through Oct. 4. . . . ¶ There's something endearingly romantic about Janine Antoni's new installation, "Swoon": the visitor passes through a corridor of wood scaffolding which reverberates with suggestive groans and sexy breathing into a tiny theatre where a crimson velvet curtain hides all but the pirouetting feet of ballet dancers performing a pas de deux from "Swan Lake." The only sound is the thud of slippers on the wooden boards—and then, for a spell, Tchaikovsky's score comes gorgeously to life. But as soon as one is drawn into the sweep of the music, it stops, and the thudding resumes. By draping the most physical of the performing arts in yards of velvet, Antoni has—paradoxically—made it more palpable. Through Nov. 15. . . . ¶ "The Studio Within" is a Disneyesque mockup of Richard Pousette-Dart's last atelier (in a carriage house in Suffern, New York), which, for hokey verisimilitude, lacks only an animated likeness of the late Abstract Expressionist flinging some paint around. Still, it's worth a look, if only for the diary pages, the odd white sculptures in the eaves, and several fine paintings, like the bubblegum impasto of "Amalfi" (1962). Through Sept. 13. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART AT PHILIP MORRIS, Park Ave. at 42nd St. (878-2550)—"Hope Sandrow: Water Life," a spare and restless installation in the midtown hubbub. Sandrow has neatly packed thousands of spiral seashells in cardboard boxes, which are themselves arranged on the gallery floors according to the idealized proportions set forth by the Greek sculptor Phidias. The walls are hung with large photographs of figures floating underwater, and a recording of running water plays continuously. Through Oct. 9. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 7:30.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—The recently opened Hall of Biodiversity, a permanent exhibit, attempts to make vivid the dangers posed to life on Earth by the exploding human population and the consequent degradation of the global environment. The centerpiece is a diorama of the Central African rain forest, enclosed in a glass box of spectacular dimensions. The museum has raided the attic to create a handsomely displayed encyclopedia of flora and fauna called "Spectrum of Life," which covers the hall's western wall and extends to an overhead canopy. Computers loaded with videos enable visitors to learn about everything from the results of American ichthyological research in Gabon to the tragedy of the ongoing forest fires in Indonesia. There's almost too much multimedia interactivity going on, though: the blare of video monitors and a film presentation make the atmosphere somewhat hectic. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (849-8300)—"Fountains: Splash and Spectacle." The best part of this historical survey of fountain design is the neat aqua booklet that comes with it, listing the top fountains in New York—from Paul Manship's golden Prometheus, at Rockefeller Center, to Gilmore Clarke's Unisphere (and unofficial swimming pool), in Queens. Alas, there are no fountains splashing here, except for those in the photographs and in prints that date back to the time of Siena's Fonte Gaia (ca. 1419). Through Oct. 11. . . . ¶ "Under the Sun: An Outdoor Exhibition of Light" is less an exhibition than a solar-energy propagandafest ("adaptable, clean, constant, durable, versatile," etc.); still, it's certain to fascinate kiddies and idealists alike. Cool solar-powered stuff (a lawnmower, a circus tent, a highway call box, a house) accompanies a retrospective of working photovoltaic cells, tracking their use

from NASA satellites to solar-powered Chinese villages. Through Oct. 25. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

DAHESH MUSEUM, 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (759-0606)—"Image and Text: Orientalist Works from the Permanent Collection," an exhibition of books, prints, and photographs that once served as source materials for Orientalist paintings, a few of which are shown here. Perhaps the highlights of the show are the photogravures of academic staple Jean-Léon Gérôme, whose scenes of Egyptian life balance documentary zeal and unbridled prurience—as in his famous image of a slave trader examining a naked girl's teeth. A modest but gratifying show for those whose taste in kitsch runs to mosques, muezzins, harem girls, and the like. Through Sept. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

ISAMU NOGUCHI GARDEN MUSEUM, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City (718-204-7088)—Works from every period in the career of the Japanese-American sculptor (1904-88) are installed in a garden and in open-air galleries carved from, and added to, an old photo-engraving factory. While it's all of interest—early gold-plated brass works, cast-bronze models for unrealized playgrounds, Japanese paper lanterns adapted for electricity—stone is the core medium. Its names alone (jasper, serpentine, Languedoc marble, red Persian travertine) are sensuous, and the stone sculptures rise among the birches, ivy, brick, and steel of Queens like indigenous art—relics of a civilization. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

JAPAN SOCIETY, 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155)—"Shiko Munakata: The Modern Master of the Woodblock" presents the bold, black ink work of the printmaker, including "Ten Disciples of Buddha" and "Eulogy to Flower Hunting." Through Sept. 27. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—Long cast as one of Pop's elder statesmen, George Segal now appears, in light of this retrospective, as a staid American realist. His life-size plaster casts and polychrome bas-reliefs from the sixties and seventies have a whiff of early Oldenburg, but they're not nearly as sly. His stiff memorials to the Holocaust and the Depression are crowd-pleasers, furthering American statuary's age-old tradition of stoic archetypes. Through Oct. 4. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

MUSEO DEL BARRIO, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (831-7272)—"Beatriz González: What an Honor to Be with You at This Historical Moment—Works, 1965-97." To the basic Pop strategy of ad-copy irony, this Colombian artist adds a political conscience. Her stylistic juxtapositions can be wry (European masterpieces repainted on furniture), direct ("Guernica" recast as a mural for a socialist factory), and even, as in her most recent work, personal: the one self-portrait here seems to have grown out of a series of Gauguin appropriations in which the exotic bare-breasted island women cover their faces in a moment of private grief. Through Oct. 25. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

THE NEW MUSEUM, 583 Broadway (219-1222)—The urban folk paintings of Lower East Sider Martin Wong mix graffiti with Ashcan School realism. In this retrospective of mostly eighties work, garish Chinatown scenes and paeans to the poet Miguel Piñero keep company with life-size realistic storefronts, such as Wong's "Iglesia Pentecostal," an edge-to-edge composition whose scumbled white passages are, nevertheless, reminiscent of the abstractions of Robert Ryman. Through Sept. 13. (Open Wednesdays and Sundays, noon to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, noon to 8.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Going It Alone

PERHAPS because wind and language are both such transporting—and fickle—elements, it's not surprising that good sailors often make good writers. Solo sailors, in particular, work under many of the same conditions as writers, such as solitude, tight working spaces, and prolonged waiting periods (whether for inspiration or for a good breeze).



A classic book by a single-hander is Joshua Slocum's *SAILING ALONE AROUND THE WORLD* (Sheridan House), an account of the first solo circumnavigation of the globe, which the author completed a hundred years ago. Slocum's writing is as elegant as his thirty-seven-foot sloop, *Spray*, whose crossing of the Atlantic he describes vividly: "Her mast now bent under a strong, steady pressure, and her bellying sail swept the sea as she rolled scuppers under, courtesying to the waves." A new biography of Slocum, *ALONE AT SEA* (Doubleday Canada), by Ann Spencer, tells why the irascible captain continually took to the sea, where he ultimately vanished, in his early sixties, alone at the helm.

Rough weather—meteorologically and emotionally—marks Lydia Bird's *SONNET* (North Point), her plangent tale of piloting a forty-two-foot sloop from Maryland to Greece. After stopping in Spain to visit her parents—her mother is an alcoholic and her father has Alzheimer's—Bird encounters a squall in the Mediterranean, during which she scribbles a log entry that suggests the haven provided by a boat of one's own: "It's gloomy out, twenty-five knots apparent. . . but even as I write I feel a bit better, she's a great boat. . . A place to think, a place to write."

Peter Nichols's *SEA CHANGE* (Penguin) chronicles a solo sail across the Atlantic, from England bound for Maine, aboard *Toad*, an engineless twenty-seven-foot wooden boat. Nichols comes to a realization about his seafaring life that could as easily describe a writer's progress: "On a sailboat you could slip through some membrane at the limit of ordinary travel into a world you could never know by any other means."

Books.

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THE DIVING BELL AND THE BUTTERFLY

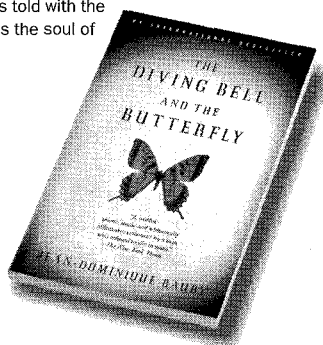
by Jean-Dominique Bauby

This amazing memoir was written through the blinking of a left eye. A debilitating stroke left French *Elle* editor Jean-Dominique Bauby permanently paralyzed and able to communicate only by blinking, yet not defeated. Bauby's story is filled with passion, anger, and wit, and it is told with the voice of a poet who has the soul of a survivor. (Vintage)

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THE UNDERTAKING

LIFE STUDIES FROM THE DISMAL TRADE

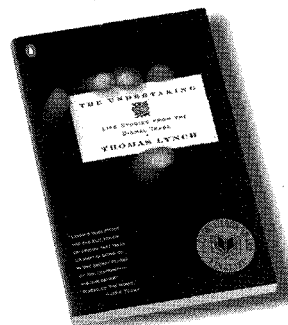
by Thomas Lynch

The Undertaking is an amazingly likable collection of essays written by the poet and undertaker, Thomas Lynch. Full of reflections on life, death, and his family's long history in the funeral trade, these essays are at once humorous and deadly serious. (Penguin)

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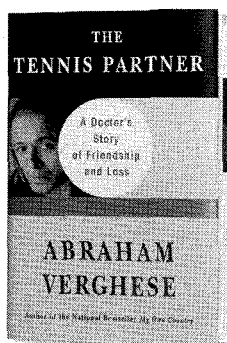


THE TENNIS PARTNER

A DOCTOR'S STORY OF FRIENDSHIP AND LOSS

by Abraham Verghese

From the author of the acclaimed bestseller, *My Own Country*, comes a story of friendship. When Abraham Verghese met David, he met a man with a sharp mind and a passion for tennis, one with whom he quickly became close friends. But David was also a recovering drug addict, and when he relapsed, it put their friendship to a final, painful test. (HarperCollins)



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ALL OVER BUT THE SHOUTIN'

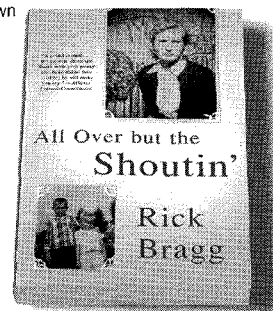
by Rick Bragg

When childhood is complicated by poverty and an abusive, alcoholic father, it becomes focused on survival. Were it not for the dedication and strength of his mother, Rick Bragg may have never left northeast Alabama and become a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter. His memoir captures the essence of the South, explores the bonds and responsibilities of family, and, in the end, celebrates his own coming-of-age. (Vintage)

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NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W. (873-3400)—"William Sidney Mount: Painter of American Life" presents more than fifty paintings by the nineteenth-century Long Island artist (1807-68) credited with the invention of American genre painting, with such scenes of rural life as "Ringing the Pig" (1848) and "Eel Spearing at Setauket" (1845). Through Oct. 25. . . . ¶ "Fading Ad Campaign: Vintage Painted Signs" showcases the work of photographer Frank H. Jump, who has documented such New York City signage as the Reckitt's Blue laundry-soap advertisement from 1898, on a building on Washington Avenue, in Brooklyn. Through Nov. 1. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Summer hours: unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

PIERRE BONNARD (1867-1947)—

Most of the drawings in this exhibition are rough, throwaway sketches, except for a series of studies for a children's book, which exert an irresistible charm, and a suite of music-hall caricatures, from 1893, that possess all the vibrant energy of Toulouse-Lautrec's work from the same era and milieu. An exquisite still-life of a vase of flowers, painted in 1930, reminds us why this artist is worth cherishing: the vivid splash of one crimson bloom anchors a symphony of whites, magically evoking a simultaneous mood of sadness and tranquillity. Through Oct. 10. (Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. 879-0500.)

WARD DAVENNY—

Charcoal drawings and two oils, all of which are monumental musings on light and landscapes. Through Sept. 19. (Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. 397-0669.)

JOHN DUBROW—Cityscapes, including one of Prospect Park and a series of nearly aerial views of Manhattan, as seen from the window of the artist's studio in the World Trade Center. Through Sept. 26. (Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. 879-6606.)

SHIRLEY GOLDFARB (1925-80)—An American painter who lived in Paris, Goldfarb was almost unknown in her native country during her lifetime; this exhibition shows what we missed out on. Influenced by both the color-field school and French conceptual painters such as Yves Klein, she worked with a palette knife to apply pure color in ways that invite intellectual consideration even as they beguile the eye. A huge blue canvas, from 1970, has the retinal impact of a work by Klein, and "Lime & Purple" has many more colors than that, smeared in thumb-size swatches, like cross-sections of Venetian-glass paperweights. Through Sept. 4. (Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223.)

"FIGURE DRAWINGS"—This survey of portraits and nudes by American artists ranges from an austere Alice Neel (a monumental ink-and-gouache portrait of a woman) to a tiny Lichtenstein (a romance-comic-book image in colored pencil). Some of the works reveal artistic personalities that differ from the ones we are accustomed to: Wayne Thiebaud's carefully finished charcoal drawing of a seated woman might almost have come from the hand of John Singer Sargent; an enigmatic pastel by Jim Dine glows with the deep hues of Odilon Redon. Through Sept. 11. (Danese, 41 E. 57th St. 223-2227.)

"A FLOWER IS TO THE SUMMER SWEET"—Yes, the show is as cloying as its title, abounding with the sort of fussily painted still-lives and sugary, turn-of-the-century vignettes that got tossed out when Cubism, Expressionism, and the other isms came to the rescue. Still, there are a few gems: Martin Johnson Heade's exquisite "Passion Flowers and Nesting Hummingbirds" is a vivid glimpse into the lush life of the Brazilian rain forest, and a watercolor of a tulip by the French nineteenth-century botanical illustrator Pi-

straction and representation. Through Sept. 29. (Blum, 99 Wooster St. 343-0441.)

MASAMICHI TOHYAMA—The ancient Japanese art of ceramics, updated by an artist who paints acrylic enamel directly onto standard square bathroom tiles, which are then fired and assembled in modular abstractions. Some of the tiles are pure, brilliant color (glossy red, Max Factor beige); others are scribbled over in Twomblyesque non-statements; still others are spray-painted to create mysterious mists. "A Story" is

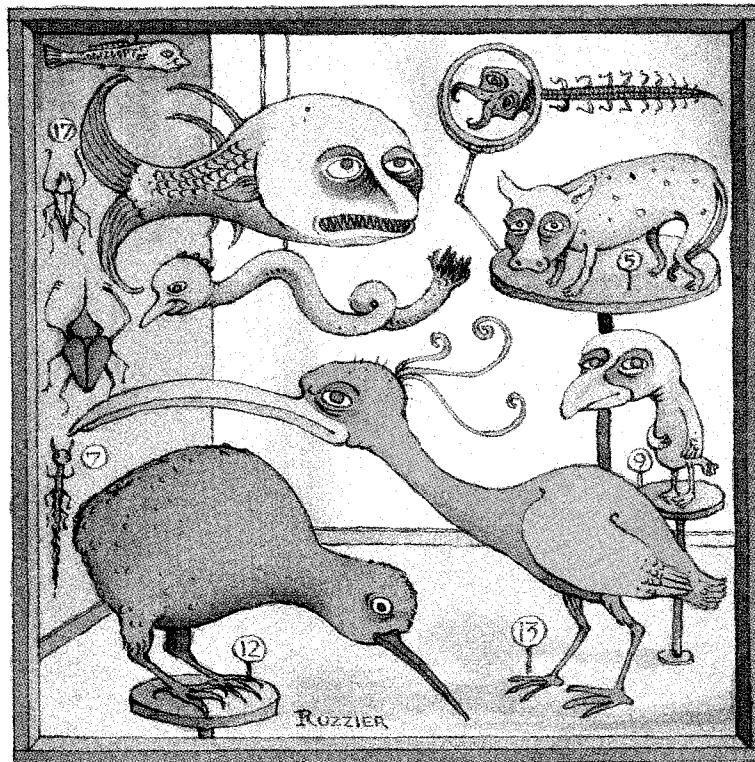
a ceramic work that alternates finger-painted grids with tiles that verge on figuration and then cross the line, elegantly, showing a beautiful calligraphic tree. Through Sept. 10. (Wickiser, 568 Broadway. 941-1817.)

LISA MACKIE—"The Journal Paintings," a series of acrylics on paper and cheesecloth, document the artist's travels. Through Sept. 29. (June Kelly, 591 Broadway. 226-1660.)

RACHEL WHITEREAD—The British sculptor, whose concrete cast of the interior of a London row house set off a career-making ruckus, now sets her sights on New York's urban architecture. But her version of a wooden water tower, cast from ghostly translucent resin, looks somewhat wan amid the real things. Still, it's a more welcome SoHo monument than Old Navy. ("Water Tower," which was funded by the Public Art Fund, can be seen by standing on the southwest corner of West Broadway and Grand St. and looking up. For more information, call 980-4575.)

"D. P. CAMP THEATRE POSTERS-1946-50"—Posters advertising such Yiddish theatre productions as "In Spite of Our Enemies," "Where Do You Get a Minyan?," and "Jews, Laugh!," which were staged in Shevibishal, Gal-

ting, Leibheim, Mannheim, and other displaced-person camps in the occupied zones of postwar Germany. Through Sept. 7. (Lubelski, 473 Broadway. 226-3424.)



Earthly creatures find a permanent niche in the Hall of Biodiversity, at the American Museum of Natural History.

erre Joseph Redouté opens a window onto a vanished era of faith in reason. Through Sept. 25. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. 535-8810.)

"HISTORIES (RE)MEMBERED"—The mountain comes to Manhattan: selections from the permanent collection of the Bronx Museum of the Arts, including work by Carrie Mae Weems, Lorna Simpson, Kara Walker, Glenn Ligon, and Luis Jiménez, make the midtown commute. Through Sept. 11. (PaineWebber Building, Sixth Ave. at 52nd St. 713-2885.)

RECENT ACQUISITIONS—The Warhols are the standouts in this themeless summer show of contemporary American masters, particularly some whimsical drawings from the late fifties, before the artist found (and founded) Pop. The exhibition also includes a fine trio of pencil drawings by Larry Rivers, illustrating Jack Kerouac's "The Lonesome Traveller," and a witty cartoon of a hippopotamus, by Ellsworth Kelly. Through Sept. 12. (Sheehan, 20 W. 57th St. 489-3331.)

SHORT LIST—KARA WALKER, City College, Convent Ave. at 138th St. 650-8951. Open Mondays through Thursdays, 11 to 4; through Sept. 18.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

YAYOI KUSAMA—An exhibition of early works on paper by this protean, delicately gifted Japanese artist strengthens her steadily rising reputation. Dating to the early fifties, before Kusama came to New York, these small-format drawings range impressively from austere fields of black ink dots to brilliantly colored gouaches that hover between ab-

PHOTOGRAPHY

"WOMEN TRAVELLERS"—Works by nine adventurers, including Leah Demchick, Marina Karella, Marcia Lippman, and Mai Duong. Through Sept. 26. (Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. 966-6223.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY—"Comparative Concepts: Photographs by August Sander, Karl Blossfeldt, Albert Renger-Patzsch, and Bernd and Hilla Becher." Through Sept. 13. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY MIDTOWN—"Mathew Brady's Portraits: Images As History, Photography As Art," a travelling show of more than a hundred daguerreotypes, albumen prints, "Imperial" salted-paper prints, and cartes de visite. Through Sept. 6. . . . ¶ "A Bronx Family Album: The Impact of AIDS, by Steve Hart." Through Sept. 6. (Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

SHORT LIST—JOCK STURGES, Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255. Through Sept. 4. . . . **LINDA TROELLER**, Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. 505-5555. Through Sept. 12.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art.)

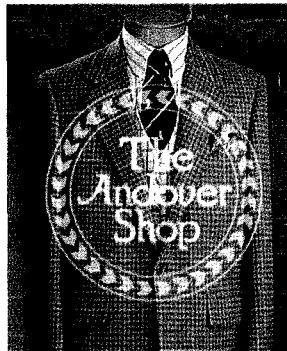
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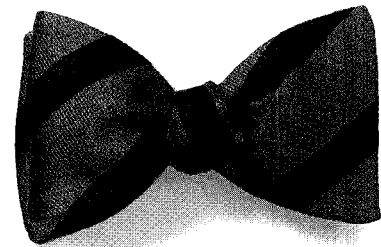
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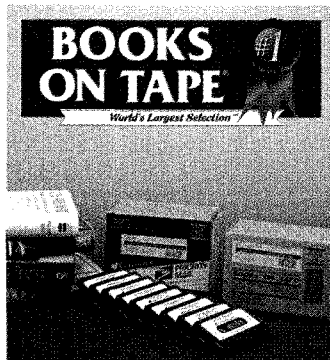


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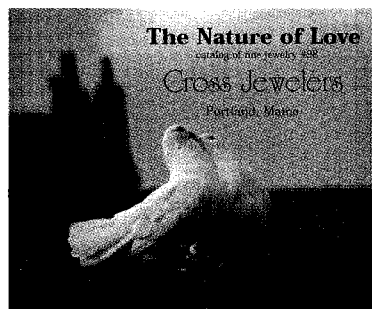


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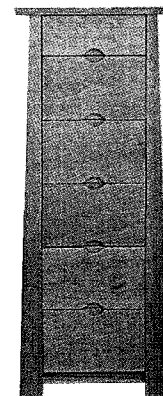
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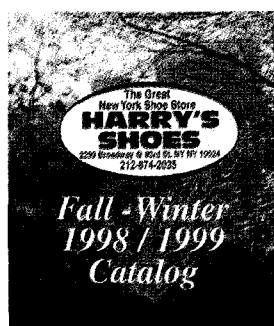
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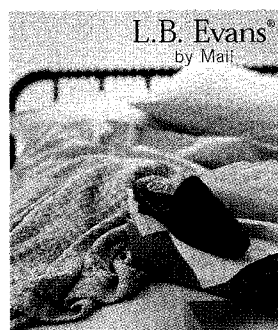
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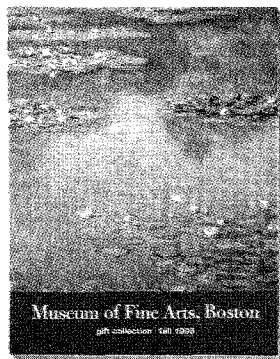
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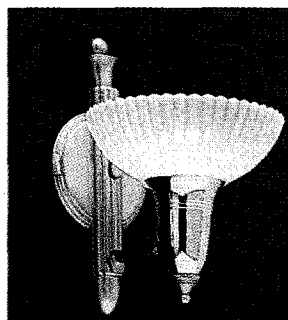


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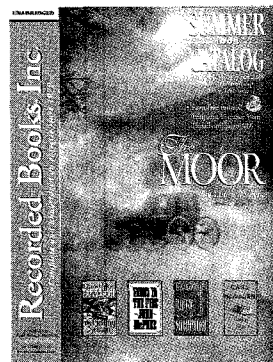


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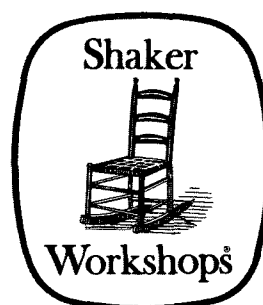


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CLASSICAL MUSIC IN TOWN

"RUSSIAN RHYTHMS ON BROADWAY"—Trinity Church's Slavic summer series ends with Richard Auldson Clark conducting the Manhattan Chamber Orchestra in Glazunov's Saxophone Concerto (featuring Gary Louie), Arensky's "Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky," and Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings. (Broadway at Wall St. Sept. 3 at 1. No tickets necessary.)

BARGEMUSIC—Violinists Camrit Zori and Calvin Wiersma, violist Robert Rinehart, and cellist Fred Sherry perform string quartets by Haydn (in D Major, Op. 71, No. 2), Brahms (in C Minor), and Stravinsky (his Three Pieces, as well as his Concertino). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061. Sept. 3 at 7:30 and Sept. 6 at 4.)

LISTENING BOOTH

LAND OF THE RISING STAR—About eight years ago, Yoshikazu Mera abandoned early promise as a tenor to reposition his voice in the lofty register of the countertenor. His risky decision paid off, and he's now emerging as a star of the early-music scene, spotlighted especially as a regular soloist with the superb Bach Collegium Japan. Mera possesses a smallish, fluently modulated voice of enchanting sweetness, and he's not afraid to explore a spectrum of expressive possibilities, though without ever sacrificing precise intonation or articulation. Two recent releases on the Swedish BIS label display the variety of Mera's gifts. **BAROQUE ARIAS** (CD-919) finds him in native countertenor territory, singing pieces by Bach, Handel, Schütz, and Johann Rudolf Ahle (the last a motet with brass choir that glows like a burnished Rembrandt). Less anticipated, and even more captivating, is **NIGHTINGALE** (CD-889), a recital of art songs by Japanese composers of the early and mid-twentieth century. Though not the first recording of Japanese art songs to hit the Western market, it is the first in which a topflight singer champions them with the same level of artistry we expect of anyone presuming to interpret, say, Schubert or Fauré. Surprises abound: even ardent partisans of the song cycle will not know "Song of Aiyon," by Kosako Yamada (1886-1965), a pioneer in the Japanese art-song movement who studied in Berlin when the lieder of Mahler and Strauss were setting the standards, or Hikaru Hayashi's "Four Songs of Dusk," which are evocative in ways that recall Ravel or Barber. In Fumio Haya-saka's haunting "Uguisu" ("Nightingale"), the unaccompanied singer mimics the inflections of Japanese traditional instruments, and the fresh simplicity of Ikuma Dan's "Six Songs for Children"—rather like American folk-song or spiritual settings of the time—must have consoled audiences when the cycle was introduced, just following the Second World War. In most of the twenty-one pieces Mera sings, Japanese melody combines with Western harmony and rhythm to create a distinctive, appealing flavor. A fascinating disk, conceived and executed with great musical sensitivity.

"SUNDAYS ON THE ISLAND"—Mordechai Rechtman conducts Mozart's "Gran Partita" for thirteen winds and double bass (K. 361). (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. Sept. 6 at noon. For information about tickets, call 718-885-2478.)

FRANZ LORCH—The organist, a professor at the Richard Strauss Conservatorium in Munich, performs Bach's C-Major Prelude and Fugue (BWV 545), chorale prelude "Nun Komm' der Heiden Heiland," and Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, in addition to works by Mozart, Vienne (his "Carillon de Westminster"), Theodore Dubois ("In Paradisum"), and Augustinus Franz Kropfreiter. (St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Ave. at 51st St. Sept. 6 at 4:45. No tickets necessary.)

SALON SOIRÉES—Mezzo-soprano Désirée Halak performs "Thus Spake Zarathustra," a Nietzsche-based cantata by Ilan Rechtman (who assists at the piano). Also on the program is Bach's Viola da Gamba Sonata No. 3, with cellist Wolfram Koessel and Mr. Rechtman. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Sept. 6 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

CHIN KIM AND YURI KIM—The violinist and the pianist perform chamber works by Schubert and Kreisler. (Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. Sept. 7 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

IVAN THOMAS—Baritone, with pianist Linda Hall and several assisting instrumentalists, in a New York debut recital that includes songs by Purcell, Fauré, Loewe, and David Heinick. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. Sept. 8 at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

MAVERICK CONCERTS—Final concerts of the season. Sept. 5 at 8: Bass Terry Cook and pianist Caroline Stoessinger perform Schubert's "Winterreise." Though this masterpiece of hibernal alienation is unexpectedly chilly fare for the Labor Day weekend, there's logic behind its programming: the cycle is being offered as a tribute to the legendary bass Paul Robeson, who performed at Maverick Concert Hall as far back as 1929, and whose centennial is being celebrated this year. . . . Sept. 6 at 3: The Audubon String Quartet performs a benefit concert comprising Shostakovich's Quartet No. 3 and the première of Peter Schickele's Quartet No. 5. (Woodstock, N.Y. 914-679-8217.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN—A pair of recitals by the Shanghai String Quartet. Sept. 5 at 8: Mozart's Quartet in G Major (K. 387), string-quartet arrangements of three traditional Chinese melodies, and, with violist Michael Tree assisting, Brahms's String Quintet in F Major (Op. 88). . . . Sept. 6 at 3: Haydn's Quartet in G Major (Op. 77, No. 1), Beethoven's Quartet in E Minor (Op. 59, No. 2), and Schumann's Piano Quintet (with Ruth Laredo). (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. The season continues through Sept. 13.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

2 BR, GT VU—The folks at *Country Home* magazine have arranged for the construction of a show home, on, of all places, a plaza outside the World Financial Center, in Battery Park City. Architect Dennis Wedlick, who apprenticed under Philip Johnson, based his design for the twenty-five-hundred-square-foot two-story house (two bedrooms, three and a half baths) on a style that was popular in the Hudson River Valley in the nineteenth century. Guided tours begin Sept. 5, at 11, and continue through Oct. 8. For more information, call 945-0505.

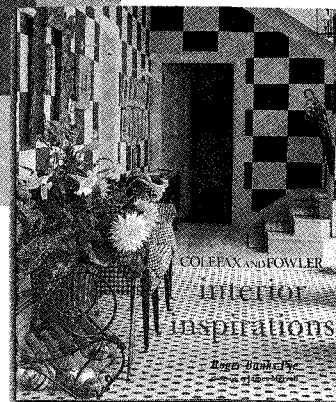
WORKING ON YOUR ROOTS—Labor Day weekend brings a pair of outrageous, and remarkably different, parties to town. On Sept. 6, starting at 2, Wigstock, the more or less annual festival of drag and music, takes over Pier 54, West St. at 13th St. For more information, call 774-7470. . . . On Sept. 7, starting at 11 A.M., Brooklyn's Eastern Parkway becomes a maelstrom of bass-heavy music, colorful costumes, and the scent of jerk chicken during the annual West Indian Day Parade. For more information, call 718-625-1515.

READING—Sept. 3 at 7:30: By Jennifer Egan, Maggie Estep, Steven Rinehart, and Ben Schrank, from their contributions to "The KGB Bar Reader," an anthology of writing that has been read at the former speakeasy in the East Village. (Barnes & Noble, Sixth Ave. at 21st St. No tickets necessary.)

TALKS—Sept. 8 at 6: New York University English professor Leonard Barkan initiates a series of scholarly reflections on the trickiest of all four-letter words, "love." (Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0571.) . . . Sept. 8 at 7: Director Peter Brook discusses his new memoir, "Threads of Time." (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160.)

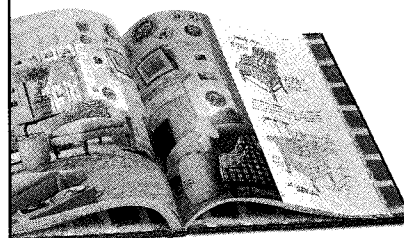
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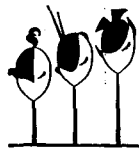
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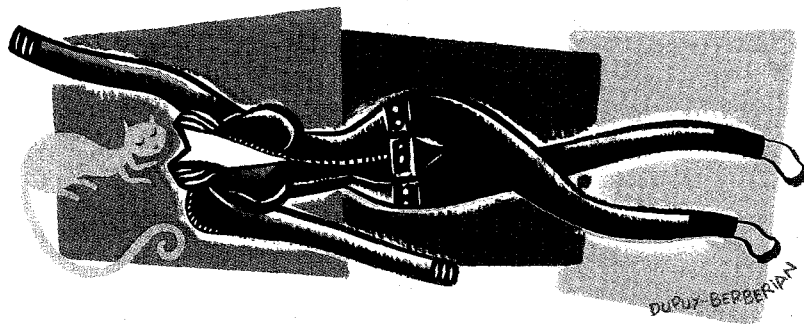
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

I Found It at the Movies



THE end of summer leaves, among other things, a residue of affection for all the movies we so eagerly lined up to see, and left, a couple of hours later, arguing into the hot night about promises fulfilled and broken. It hasn't been nearly the meteoric season at the movies that the studios would have us believe: only a handful of films came through with the goods—that indelible popcorn moment that blows you away. But it was fun,

Plaza; 840-4040), are crammed with merchandise that seems aimed mostly at the youngest moviegoers. (There's nothing lethal—just Tweety Birds, everywhere.) Across the street, Mulan-o-mania is going strong at the **DISNEY STORE** (210 W. 42nd St.; 221-0430). A fully posable Mulan-in-training doll (\$12) comes complete with bow and arrow, sword, and tiny plastic weights for young warrior princesses to be. Over at the **NAT SHERMAN** tobacco emporium (500 Fifth Ave.; 764-4175), you can check out cigarette holders (\$9 and up)



all the same. Maybe the only way to sustain the summer-movie jag is to indulge oneself in Hollywood's merchandising machine and pick up a few movie souvenirs.

The comic-book store **FORBIDDEN PLANET** (840 Broadway; 473-1576) has a horde of kitsch treasures from the recent special-effects extravaganzas. The Scully and Mulder dolls, dressed in chic Arctic wear (\$17; sold separately), will do little to enhance the torpid memory of "The X-Files"; more exciting is that lonely "Armageddon" action figure—a Ben Affleck lookalike (\$21), who comes with a removable helmet and an exploding nuclear device. Even more fun can be had with the remote-control fast-attack Godzilla (\$37), a foot-stomping, roaring mechanical toy that's a lot more exciting than his celluloid prototype was.

In the same neighborhood, **FOOTLIGHT RECORDS** (113 E. 12th St.; 533-1572) carries a terrific selection of glorious soundtrack LPs, notably an abundance of Nino Rota film scores (\$20-\$30), including music from one of best rereleases of the summer, the spruced-up version of Fellini's 1957 masterpiece, "Nights of Cabiria."

All three floors of the brand-new **WARNER BROS. STUDIO STORE**, right at the center of Times Square (1 Times Square

like the one Johnny Depp used while mumbling his heavily stoned Hunter S. Thompson aphorisms in "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas." Gonzo.

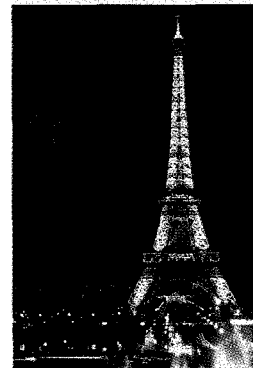
Not surprisingly, there's a fair amount of movie-related stuff available through home-shopping outlets. The spitting image of Puffy, the scene-stealing, speed-addled dog from "There's Something About Mary," has been found, in full-body cast, for sale (\$29) on **TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX's** Web site for the movie (www.aboutmary.com). And if you surf over to the **J. PETERMAN** catalogue (www.jpeterman.com) you'll find copies of Uma Thurman's leath-erette cat suit from "The Avengers." Although the film was pretty much a disaster, that garment—the buckle *alone*—almost made the whole messy enterprise worthwhile. The Peterman people have trim, Uma-esque sizes in stock, but they'll make larger sizes on request, no questions asked. (With a two-thousand-dollar price tag, it's hardly a bargain.)

Perhaps the best shopping tip to emerge from the summer-movie binge comes from Sean P. Hayes, who played the gay, unemployed photographer in "Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss." Grab a Polaroid One Step (\$29 at any **NOBODY BEATS THE WIZ**) and shoot your own end-of-summer picture—it'll last longer.

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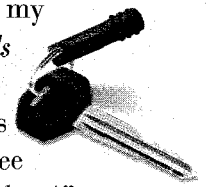


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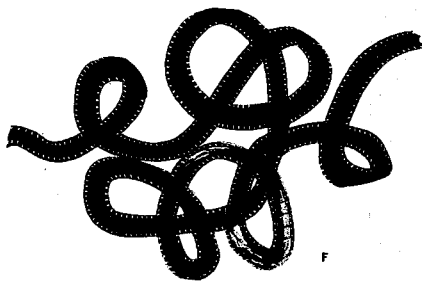
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THE MOVIES



OPENINGS

FIRELIGHT—A nineteenth-century love story from writer-director William Nicholson, about a Swiss governess (Sophie Marceau) who manages to become the caretaker of her own illegitimate daughter (Dominique Belacourt). Also with Stephen Dillane and Kevin Anderson. Opening Sept. 4. (Angelika Film Center.)

KNOCK OFF—An action thriller, set in Hong Kong at the time of the handover of control to the Chinese, with Jean-Claude Van Damme and Rob Schneider. Directed by Tsui Hark. Opening Sept. 4.

LIKE IT IS—Love at a gay night club in London. With Ian Rose, Steve Bell, Roger Daltrey, and Dani Behr; directed by Paul Oremland. Opening Sept. 4. (Quad Cinema.)

MODULATIONS—Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening Sept. 4.

FILM NOTES

(If a movie has been reviewed recently in *The Current Cinema*, the date of its review is given.)

ANNIE (1982)—As the soused, man-hungry Miss Hannigan, the head of the New York City orphanage where Annie lives till the age of ten, Carol Burnett is both hag and trollop, and her inflections spin around and make her the butt of her own sarcasm; she's gloriously macabre. But the rest of this big movie (directed by John Huston) has the feel of a manufactured romp. Annie (Aileen Quinn) and the other little orphans seem to have been trained by Ethel Merman; they belt in unison. And when they dance it's showy leaping about, and the editing breaks it up, making it more hectic. With Albert Finney as Daddy Warbucks, Ann Reinking as his secretary, Tim Curry as Rooster, Geoffrey Holder as Punjab, Bernadette Peters as Lily, Edward Herrmann as F.D.R., and the little scene-stealer Toni Ann Gisondi as Molly. —*Pauline Kael* (Walter Reade Theatre; Sept. 5-6.)

BLADE—Ugly. Vampires prepare for war against humans, throw parties at a decadent night club, and snarl a lot. Wesley Snipes plays a half-man, half-vampire good guy who hurls various things at the vampires, which causes them to explode. Adapted from the Marvel Comics series, this movie lacks the mournfulness that sustains a good horror strip; it's trashy, but too deafening and invasive to have the appeal of good pulp. —*Sarah Kerr* (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Sutton, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE CHAMBERMAID ON THE TITANIC—Horty (Olivier Martinez) earns drinks and tips telling heavy-breathing, erotic stories, mostly fanciful, to his foundry mates in a bar back home in Lorraine. It's April, 1912, and he's just returned from Southampton, England, where he spent one night with Marie (Aitana Sánchez Gijón)—the night before the Titanic sailed. Zeppe (Aldo Maccione), a travelling actor, arrives, sees Horty's potential as a big-time performer on the circuit, and saves the film by liberating Horty (and us) from that dingy bar and its drooling patrons. The movie's earnest concentration on sexual obsession and jealousy is then thankfully supplanted by a comical examination of post-Titanic showbiz. In French. —*Ken Marks* (Quad Cinema.)

DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST (1991)—There's teaching potential in Julie Dash's acclaimed celebration of the Georgia and Carolina Sea Islands culture, especially for classes in African-American studies. But it's hard to imagine how Dash expects general-interest audiences, black or white, to find their way into her dreamy evocation of Gullah traditions in transition. In theory Dash aims to present a folkloric story from inside a folk culture, but her script, set on the eve of a family's departure to the mainland, makes the material seem distant and aesthetic. Fortunately, Dash and her cinematographer, Arthur Jafa, endow their outdoor imagery with a supernal prettiness, hitting otherworldly shades of purplish blue and yellow-orange, as if they'd managed to drape an Oriental scarf over the sun. If this movie has gained a following beyond those fascinated by the Sea Islands, it's possibly because it peddles the same exotic mixture as "The Piano" does—men and women with contemporary emotional drives and nineteenth-century costumes, parading on a primitive shore. —*Michael Sragow* (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 8.)

THE DETECTIVE (1968)—Frank Sinatra as a New York City police detective. He doesn't give much hint of his sometime ability as an actor in this brutal thriller that's meant to be cool and tough and gamy. Homosexuality, police corruption, and race relations are exploited in the moralistic "outspoken" style of the screenwriter Abby Mann, while the director, Gordon Douglas, keeps pounding away. With Lee Remick, Jacqueline Bisset, Jack Klugman, and Robert Duvall. —*P.K.* (Walter Reade Theatre; Sept. 7.)

EVER AFTER—A sumptuous retelling of the Cinderella tale, with Drew Barrymore as the feisty stepdaughter and Anjelica Huston as the conniving stepmother who wants to marry her own daughter off to the handsome prince (Dougray Scott). Barrymore is sweet and amusing, but Huston gives the memorable performance—she swoops down on every actor's line like a hawk, leaving only gristle. —*Bruce Diones* (Beekman, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, 19th Street East 6, and Waverly.)

HALLOWEEN: H20—Most of the sequels to "Halloween," John Carpenter's original shocker, were tripe, but this one, directed by Steve Miner, has a freshness—even a kind of wit—mixed in with all the blood. It also has Jamie Lee Curtis, who was always the mainstay of the "Halloween" saga at its best. The movie is not the exercise in undiluted fright that Carpenter gave us; nor, perhaps, should we expect it to be. Viewers of this stuff are less innocent than ever before, and Miner trades efficiently on their knowing glee. —*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in *A Critic at Large*, 8/10/98.) (Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK—Terry McMillan's story about a beautiful buppie named Stella (Angela Bassett, looking so buff that she could pose for a muscle magazine), who falls in love, in Jamaica, with a man half her age (Taye Diggs, quite effective as a smoldering Teddy bear). This is Harlequin Romance land, and the film squeaks by as long as it's content to watch its lovers throwing off sparks. But the second half, in which Bassett struggles to fit love into her workaholic life, goes on forever. While Bassett is lovely here, she's also a little steely and impersonal. Whoopi Goldberg helps out immensely as Stella's obnoxious best friend—it's her same wacky schtick, but looser and more clever than usual. —*S.K.* (Astor Plaza, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Metro Cinema, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

I MARRIED A STRANGE PERSON!—Bill Plympton's special brand of dementia—faces imploding, elongated tongues wrapping around heads, cigarettes being smoked from every orifice—has been a staple of animation festivals for the past ten years. Here he stretches out to feature length, and the results are mixed.

The plot kicks off with a freak accident involving orgasmic birds, a satellite dish, and a guy named Grant, who suddenly gains the power to make his every weird thought take shape; in other words, he turns into an animator. A battle with a power-mad television mogul ensues, and it's not very interesting. But along the way, the Plympton trademarks—fine drawing, unexpected perspectives, inspired perversions bursting through a civilized veneer—are on gross, glorious view. There's a great sequence in which Grant and his wife are having sex, and their house and everything in it—the flower and the vase, the comb and the brush, the wing tip and the pump—get it on in sybaritic sympathy.—*K.M.* (Angelika Film Center.)

MARK TWAIN'S AMERICA—Stephen Low's diminutive 3-D documentary about our greatest humorist should be given credit for at least achieving an element of surprise. What other recent movie director has had the courage to hurl an author at his audience instead of an asteroid? The movie, which clocks in at just under an hour and uses nineteenth-century photography as well as scenes with contemporary Twain groupies, is given a Southern-fried narration by an actor who apparently thinks that the bewhiskered man in the white suit is Colonel Sanders. A close encounter with a champion jumping frog that can bound twenty feet almost makes the nose-ache from the Imax goggles worth it.—*Jay Fielden* (Lincoln Square.)

MODULATIONS—Iara Lee's compelling documentary chronicles how sound technology has eclipsed traditional modes of performance in much recent pop music. Without passing aesthetic judgments, Lee focusses on how the manipulation of sound has allowed d.j.s and sound mixers to fill the spot once reserved for composers, sometimes with impressive creativity. "Electronic music is the hot-rodding of the nineties," declares synthesizer pioneer Robert Moog, and the film's hyperactive editing, by Paula Heredia, underscores the visceral thrill his comment implies. To anyone who's been engrossed in the pop scene for the past three decades, this should prove a nostalgic, and often enlightening, hip-hop down memory lane. But music lovers not drawn to youth culture should check it out, too: in a mere seventy-five minutes they'll get a beautifully crafted précis of sonic experimentation and will sustain no hearing loss in the process.—*James M. Keller* (Quad Cinema; starting Sept. 4.)

THE NEGOTIATOR—The summer's first action film that's as rich in character as it is in suspense. The hypertense plot—a hostage negotiator (Samuel L. Jackson) takes some hostages of his own while another police strategist (Kevin Spacey) tries to persuade him to give up—allows ample room for two well-modulated performances. The movie is packed with a terrific supporting cast—particularly the late J. T. Walsh.—*B.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Showplace, and Village East Cinemas.)

NEXT STOP WONDERLAND—This smart-talking comedy, set in Boston, concerns Erin (Hope Davis) and Alan (Alan Gelfant), two independent souls who are out of synch in their respective occupations: she's a nurse who should be a doctor; he's a plumber who

should be a marine biologist. They're obviously made for each other, but writer-director-editor Brad Anderson playfully refuses to allow them to meet cute. Unlike the heavy-handed "Good Will Hunting," this gifted-Boston-misfit romance floats, adroitly mixing thoughtfulness, farce, and surprise.—*K.M.* (Angelika Film Center, Cinema II, and Lincoln Square.)

THE PURPLE ROSE OF CAIRO (1985)—The thirteenth movie that Woody Allen directed, this comedy has a small, rapt quality; he wrote it for Mia Farrow, and it seems scaled to her cheekbones. The time is 1935; and she is Cecilia, who lives in a small town in New Jersey and can't hold a job for long because her thoughts wander away to the glamorous worlds she sees on the screen at the Jewel Theater. This is the first Woody Allen movie in which a whole batch of actors really interact and spark each other. Jeff Daniels plays a dashing young screen character who bounds down from the black-and-white

for the sake of others?—that pretty soon all you want is for Sheriff and Tony to make up their damn minds. One further complication: Lewis's lawyer, Beth (Anne Heche), falls in love with Sheriff while begging him to go to jail. The result of all this is a sort of primer on current American moviemaking: it starts off hip and loose, lightened by the presence of its young indie stars, but slowly seizes up into mainstream melodrama. The best reason to stay with it is Vaughn, whose lanky wryness wards off the threat of pomposity. The worst reason is Jada Pinkett Smith, who gets stuck with a thankless role as the unwittingly lethal villain—a newspaper journalist, of course.—*A.L.* (Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Village East Cinemas.)

SAVING PRIVATE RYAN—Steven Spielberg's new picture, one of his best, is a sandwich. The meat of the tale concerns a bunch of U.S. Army Rangers who are sent into Normandy to rescue the sole survivor of four brothers.

On either side of this bold endeavor you get half an hour of unyielding combat: first, the D Day landings on Omaha Beach and, later, a consummate last stand in which too few Americans try to hold a bridge against too many Germans and too many tanks. Spielberg has arranged his violence into a semblance of pure disorder. The illusion holds, complete with severed limbs and wellsprings of blood, and it feels honorable; Spielberg's preachy movies can be an awful grind, but, apart from a disposable coda, this new work is too swift (and often too inaudible) to weigh you down.—*A.L.* (8/3/98) (Chelsea West, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

SNAKE EYES—Set in Atlantic City, on the night of a heavyweight boxing match, Brian De Palma's new thriller features an over-emoting Nicolas Cage as Rick Santoro, a corrupt local detective who is loud and chummy and wears hideous shirts. When the Secretary of Defense (Joel Fabiani), who's in town to catch the fight, is assassinated, Santoro's moment of glory arrives: he steps in to help his

old buddy, Navy Commander Kevin Dunne (Gary Sinise), cover up the fact that he left the Secretary unguarded, and orders the police to search for a suspicious-looking brunette in a blond wig (Carla Gugino). Santoro soon finds himself lost in the mists of a rapidly shifting story in which nothing is as it seems. In spite of its noirish glow, De Palma's thriller is oddly unsuspenseful. Although his vaunted technique and Hitchcockian effects are all here, there's no life in the story (co-written by De Palma and David Koepp), and the last-minute burst of sentimentality is especially lame.—*Daphne Merkin* (8/17/98) (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, East 85th Street, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Olympia, 72nd Street East, and State.)

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY—The Farrelly Brothers, who have tipped the outrageousness scale before ("Dumb and Dumber," "Kingpin"), come up with some great new gross-out gags in this romantic comedy. The star, Cameron Diaz, in her Olivia Newton-John haircut, is the perfect naive foil—she looks like she never knows what hit her. As the two loopy guys who are in love with her, Matt Dillon and Ben Stiller are garishly charming and full of desperate and irreverent ploys to get the girl. The film is packed with tasteless jokes (the best of them are



Opening Sept. 4, Iara Lee's "Modulations."

image and into color, and takes Cecilia out of the theatre with him; he's also the ambitious actor who arrives in the town to try to persuade the character to go back up on the screen where he belongs. Also with Danny Aiello, Stephanie Farrow, Zoe Caldwell, John Wood, Edward Herrmann, Van Johnson, Deborah Rush, Annie Joe Edwards, Karen Akers, Irving Metzman, Milo O'Shea, Alexander H. Cohen, and, in a spectacular cameo, Dianne Wiest. The original music is by Dick Hyman.—*P.K.* (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 5 and Sept. 7.)

RETURN TO PARADISE—Three young men meet up in Malaysia and have such a ball that it's only a matter of time before fate intervenes. Sheriff (Vince Vaughn) and Tony (David Conrad) fly back to New York, leaving behind the sweetly spaced-out Lewis (Joaquin Phoenix) and, more important, a stash of hash. Two years later, Sheriff learns that Lewis was arrested in possession of the drugs and sentenced to death; only if the other two return to Malaysia and share the sentence—three years each in a hellhole—will their friend be allowed to live. It's a sharp hook for any plot, but Joseph Ruben's movie, written by Bruce Robinson and Wesley Strick, spends so long skewering us on the ethical predicament—How much should we suffer

crudely sexual), and it has a refreshing mean-spiritedness.—*B.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, and Village East Cinemas.)

THE THIEF—Considering that Pavel Chukhrai's movie is set in the Soviet Union in the early nineteen-fifties, it's pretty easy to watch. The center of events is a young boy (Misha Philipchuk), whose mother takes up with a handsome and immoral soldier called Tolyan (Vladimir Mashkov). The three of them scoot from one set of lodgings to the next, armed with little but a sack of stolen silverware; the movie is, among other things, a



Jean-Claude Van Damme in
Tsui Hark's "Knock Off."

dark Dickensian comedy of the nomadic—of the need to live by one's wits. As the film moves, rather too hastily, toward its resolution, you might feel cheated by a sense of emotional patness; for the most part, however, there is real grit and sting in this slight tale. In Russian.—*A.L.* (7/20/98) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

YOUNG AT HEART (1954)—A remake of the 1938 "Four Daughters," with Frank Sinatra taking over the John Garfield role, the daughters reduced to three, and songs added. It isn't the monstrosity that it might have been, but in the thirties when Garfield, a rootless product of the big city and the Depression, encounters the cozy life of a small-town middle-class family it enrages him by making him feel how deprived he has been; in the fifties when Sinatra, an orphan who has never found a place for himself, expresses the same kind of chip-on-the-shoulder bitterness he seems just a sorehead and a loser. Still, the first half is watchable; Sinatra handles his cynical lines well, and there's a lot of activity around the family as you get to know the daughters—Doris Day, Dorothy Malone, and Elizabeth Fraser—and their suitors. But after Sinatra and Day go off to the city together, there's nothing much to look at but their suffering in drab rooming houses. Doris Day is too competent-looking to play a passive wifey who just wrings her hands while her husband keeps failing in his singing jobs; from the look of the back of her stiff head and her ducktail bob, you expect her to take over or, at least, do something. Directed by Gordon Douglas.—*P.K.* (Walter Reade Theatre; Sept. 4-6.)

YOUR FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS—Another dirty comedy of bad manners from director Neil LaBute. The contemptuous heroes of his last picture, "In the Company of Men," were venal enough, but, compared to the inhabitants of the new movie, they seem about as noxious as the Hardy Boys. This time we are introduced to two couples: Mary (Amy Brenneman) lives with Barry (Aaron Eckhart), while Terri (Catherine Keener) lives with Jerry (Ben Stiller). Jerry starts an affair with Mary (what *does* she see in him?), Terri falls for a gallery assistant called Cheri (Nastassja Kinski), and Barry, the only sensible one, continues to have sex with himself. It's hard to care about the damage these people do to each other, since most of it will strike the audience as richly deserved. LaBute's attempt to follow in the footsteps of Restoration comedy is undercut by the fact that his dialogue is only fitfully funny, and you can't help but feel soured by the flat, ritualistic look of the action. The one enlivening performance comes, surprisingly, from Jason Patric; he plays a good-looking monster named Cary, and he has the nerve to suggest that, in a glum world, he's actually having fun.—*A.L.* (8/24-31/98) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6.)

ALSO PLAYING

THE AVENGERS: Chelsea West, Coronet Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Waverly. . . . **CONCERT OF WILLS: MAKING THE GETTY CENTER:** Film Forum. . . . **DANCE WITH ME:** Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **THE EEL:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema. . . . **54:** Gotham Cinema, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **THE GOVERNESS:** Paris. . . . **HENRY FOOL:** Eastside Playhouse. . . . **A MERRY WAR:** First & 62nd Cinemas and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **NIGHTS OF CABIRIA:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema. . . . **THE OPPOSITE OF SEX:** Angelika Film Center and Regency. . . . **THE PARENT TRAP:** Cinema 3rd Avenue, Guild, and Lincoln Square. . . . **π:** Angelika Film Center. . . . **SEE THE SEA:** Quad Cinema. . . . **SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS:** Angelika Film Center, Cinema I, and 62nd & Broadway. . . . **SMOKE SIGNALS:** Village East Cinemas. . . . **THE SPANISH PRISONER** (reviewed in our issue of 4/13/98): Eastside Playhouse. . . . **UNMADE BEDS:** The Screening Room. . . . **WESTERN:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **WHY DO FOOLS FALL IN LOVE:** Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **WRONGFULLY ACCUSED:** Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 64th and 2nd, State, and Village East Cinemas.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

FILM FORUM 2 AND 3, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—**THEATRE 2:** Through Sept. 10: "Brazil" (1985, Terry Gilliam). . . . **THEATRE 3:** "The Young Girls of Rochefort" (1967, Jacques Demy; in French), with Catherine Deneuve and Françoise Dorléac. **MUSEUM OF MODERN ART,** Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Sept. 3 at 2:30: "The Big Trail" (1930, Raoul Walsh). . . . Sept. 3 at 6: "Riders of the Purple Sage" (1925, Lynn Reynolds; silent). . . . Sept. 4 at 2:30 and Sept. 6 at 2: "The Race to Save 100 Years" (1998, Scott Benson) and "Sherlock, Jr." (1924, Buster Keaton; silent). . . . Sept. 4 and Sept. 8 at 6: "Hail the Woman" (1921, John Griffith Wray; silent). . . . Sept. 4 at 8 and Sept. 6 at 5: "Peeping Tom" (1960, Michael Powell). . . . Sept. 5 at 2 and Sept. 7 at 6: "The Projectionist" (1970, Harry Hurwitz). . . . Sept. 5 at 5 and Sept. 7 at 2:30: "The Purple Rose of Cairo" (†). . . . Sept. 8 at 2:30: "Daughters of the Dust" (†).

WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of films starring Frank Sinatra. Sept. 2-3 at 2 and 6:35: "The Manchurian Candidate" (1962, John Frankenheimer). . . . Sept. 2-3 at 4:20 and 9: "Von Ryan's Express" (1965, Mark Robson). . . . Sept. 4 at 2 and 6:45 and Sept. 5-6 at 6:45: "Young at Heart" (†). . . . Sept. 4-6 at 4:30 and 9:10: "The Man with the Golden Arm" (1955, Otto Preminger). . . . Sept. 7 at 2 and 6: "Lady in Cement" (1968, Gordon M. Douglas). . . . Sept. 7 at 3:50 and 7:50: "The Detective" (†). . . . Sept. 8 at 2 and 6:30: "Come Blow Your Horn" (1963, Bud Yorkin). . . . Sept. 8 at 4:10 and 8:40: "Ocean's 11" (1960, Lewis Milestone). . . . ¶ Weekend showings for children. Sept. 5-6 at 2: "Annie" (†).

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A program of films directed or produced by Steven Spielberg. Sept. 5 at 2: "Amistad" (1997). . . . Sept. 5 at 4:30: "Twister" (1996, Jan De Bont). . . . Sept. 6 at 2: "Schindler's List" (1993).

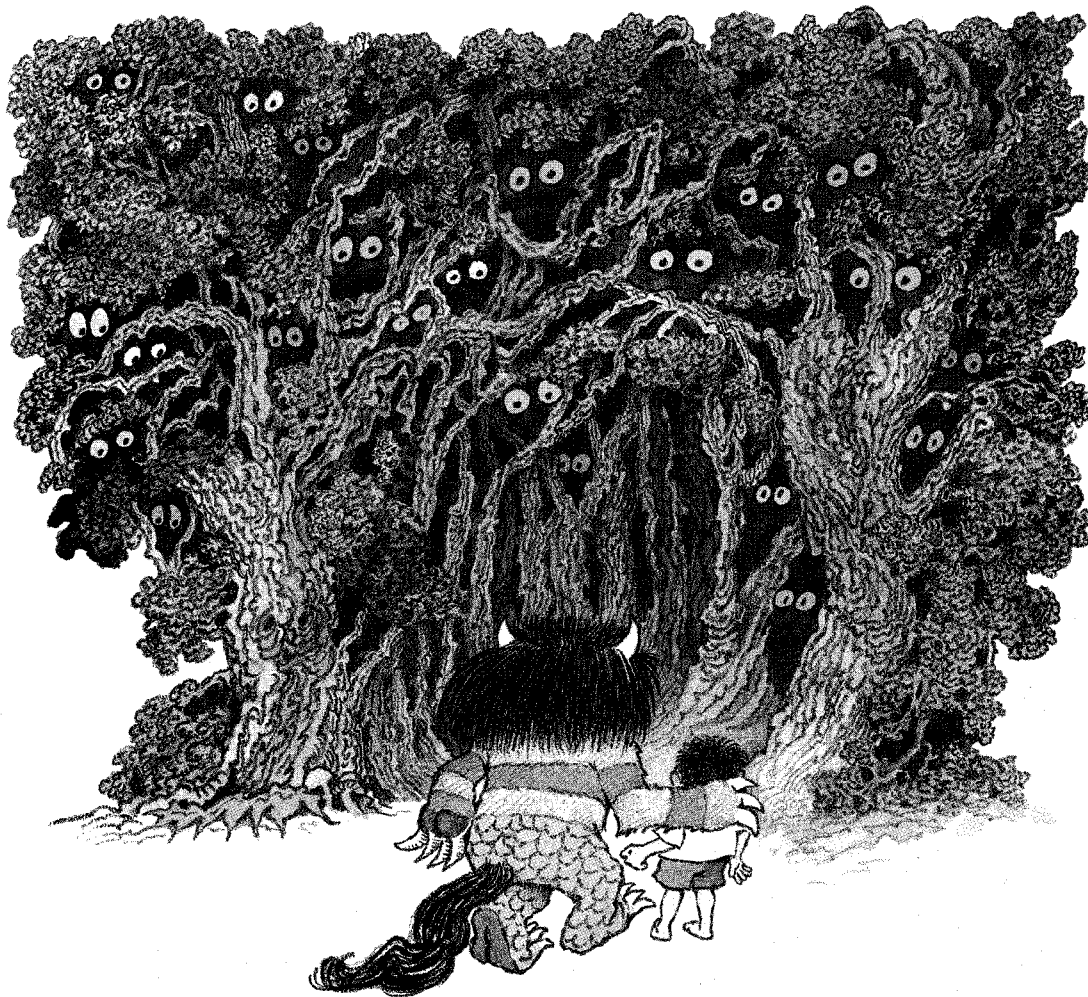
MUSEUM OF TELEVISION AND RADIO, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Through Sept. 20: "A Voyage Round My Father" (1982, Alvin Rakoff), with Laurence Olivier and Alan Bates. . . . ¶ Through Sept. 24: A series of films starring the Monty Python troupe.

A DIFFERENT LIGHT BOOKSTORE, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Sept. 6 at 7, the feature will be "In This Our Life" (1942, John Huston), with Bette Davis and Olivia de Havilland.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St.
ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at Broadway.
BECKMAN, Second Ave. at 66th St.
CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd St.
CHELSEA WEST, 333 W. 23rd St.
CINEMA I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CORONET CINEMAS, Third Ave. at 59th St.
CRITERION CENTER, Broadway at 44th St.
EAST 85TH STREET, First Ave. at 85th St.
EASTSIDE PLAYHOUSE, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, Broadway at 84th St.
86TH STREET EAST TWIN, Third Ave. at 86th St.
EMBASSY I, 2, AND 3, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th St.
FILM FORUM, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd St.
GOTHAM CINEMA, Third Ave. at 58th St.
GUILD, 33 W. 50th St.
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, Broadway at 63rd St.
LINCOLN SQUARE, Broadway at 68th St.
METRO CINEMA I AND 2, Broadway at 99th St.
MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th St.
NEW YORK TWIN, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19TH STREET EAST 6, Broadway at 19th St.
OLYMPIA I AND II, Broadway at 107th St.
ORPHEUM VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
PARIS, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th St.
QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th St.
REGENCY, Broadway at 67th St.
THE SCREENING ROOM, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd St.
64TH AND 2ND, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72ND STREET EAST, Third Ave. at 71st St.
STATE, Broadway at 45th St.
SUTTON I AND 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th St.
VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, Second Ave. at 12th St.
VILLAGE THEATRE VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
WAVERLY I AND 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th St.



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"Slamming" is the practice of switching a customer from one carrier to another without

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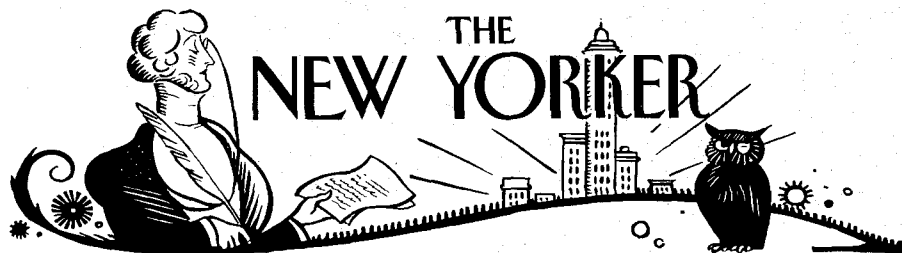
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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

NO COMMENT DEPT.

From *The American Oxonian*, a quarterly publication of the Association of American Rhodes Scholars, winter, 1998:

“ALSO from Washington, Bill CLINTON writes that the biggest family news is he and Hillary have become empty nesters. Also, Hillary turned fifty. He says he likes being married to an older woman, but wishes their daughter wasn’t so far away. He still loves his job, but says that how Washington views the world, spends its time, and treats people is often another matter. Bill writes that seeing friends eases the pain of the empty nest and removes the barnacles he picks up in the grind. The biggest lesson learned during the past year: It isn’t going to get any easier, but that’s not all bad. The biggest lesson learned since Oxford: There may be no place or time like the one we knew so long ago, but every day is a gift, deserving of gratitude. Most of us come out ahead of where we would be if we only got what we deserve.”

THE INSIDE SCOOP

The haggling begins for the highest-priced sex story in history.



INFLATION may be at bay elsewhere in the country, but in Washington the cost of top-grade political dirt has never been higher. On August 20th, Phil Bunton, an amiable Scotsman, who is the editor-in-chief of the supermarket tabloid the *Star*, proved this by making the largest cash offer in the history of the twenty-four-year-old scandal sheet, breaking the seven-figure barrier for the first time. Federal Expressed from the *Star*’s headquarters, in Tarrytown, New York, Bunton’s one-sentence offer promised Mon-

ica Lewinsky “one million dollars for exclusive rights to her story—if and when she should decide to talk publicly.”

The *Star*’s offer paled beside those from book publishers. Last week, Judith Regan weighed in. Her brash, down-market imprint at HarperCollins—owned by the conservative media mogul Rupert Murdoch, who also, coincidentally, founded the *Star*—put up two million dollars for a book by Lewinsky, according to a source who is familiar with the offer. This sum was, in turn, dwarfed later in the week, when an undisclosed publisher faxed Lewinsky a confidential six-million-dollar offer. If the deal is consummated, Lewinsky will pocket the second-highest advance in publishing history to an American author for a single book—after General Colin Powell, who received \$6.5 million for his autobiography.

Bunton thinks back fondly to the old days, six years ago, when he got away with paying an earlier Clinton innamorata, Gennifer Flowers, a hundred and thirty thousand dollars for her story. And he paid Sherry Rowlands, the prostitute who played footsie with the former Clinton adviser Dick Morris, less than thirty thousand for her story just two years ago.

It’s true that Morris was not a household name, and that Clinton was merely a candidate at the time that Flowers told all, but raw market forces are also behind the inflationary trend. The demand for dirt has never been higher because the competition for the information has never been fiercer, Bunton says. And that’s because the mainstream press has gone from scoffing at the tabloids to invading their turf.

“When the Flowers story first broke, the mainstream press dumped all over us,” Bunton says. “Now they’re every bit as aggressive as we are in chasing the sex details. The sex story is not the sort of story that the *New York Times* should be covering at all. They’re doing our stories!” Indeed, Richard Gooding, the gutter-savvy reporter for the *Star* who

has written most of its political exposés, believes that the mainstream press has outdone the tabloids in tastelessness. While the *Times* uses explicit anatomical terms, Gooding points out that the tabloids, in deference to their “fairly old-fashioned readership,” must shyly resort to such terms as “the presidential seal of approval” to describe the stain on Lewinsky’s infamous dress.

Steve Coz, the editor-in-chief of the *National Enquirer*, says that, even with his checkbook open, there’s hardly any



information available that hasn’t already been given free to the respectable press. He, too, has offered cash for Lewinsky’s story, and also for a photograph of her in the aforementioned dress, and for Linda Tripp’s tapes. But, he complains, “with Ken Starr’s office leaking everything under the sun, there are very few tidbits worth going after.” (Starr has vehemently denied any leaks from his office.)

So blurred are the boundaries these days between high journalism and low that, according to Bunton, the *Star*’s reporters frequently “share lucrative information” with members of the mainstream press. Such alliances, he says, can be mutually beneficial: the tabloids help the mainstream reporters by breaking open a story for them when a source is demanding money.

Despite the wads of cash being waved at Lewinsky, there has been no official

word from her camp about whether she intends to sell her story at all. If Monica does decide to stay mum, the tabloids have some other avenues to pursue. "There's always Hillary," Bunton suggests, dreamily. "If she told everything, she'd be worth damn well over a million." Unless, of course, the mainstream press gets there first. —JANE MAYER

MARKETING NOTES

What the organizers of the Million Youth March really want.



LAST Wednesday, a federal judge ruled that the city's refusal to grant the organizers of the *soi-disant* Million Youth March a permit to hold their event when and where they want to hold it—this coming Saturday, September 5th, on Malcolm X Boulevard—was a First Amendment no-no. The city, citing public safety concerns, had offered Randalls Island, in the East River, or Van Cortlandt Park, in the Bronx, as alternatives. These sites can be found on maps of Greater New York, but they are not exactly central. The impasse ended up in court, where the judge declared that the remoteness of the city's sites would "adversely affect" the organizers' ability "to get their message out."

Well, yes—that was the idea. Civil liberties has never been Mayor Giuliani's specialty. But if ever a message has cried out to be adversely affected, the M.Y.M.'s is it. The event's claimed inspiration, the 1995 Million Man March in Washington, convened by Louis Farrakhan, somehow succeeded in creating an atmosphere of peaceful reflection, notwithstanding the weirdness on the platform. The M.Y.M. promises no such redemptive surprises. Its front man, Khalid Muhammad, used to be Farrakhan's deputy, and he still affects the style of his former boss—the sharp threads, the expressionless bodyguards, the Muslim trappings ("In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful . . ."). In 1994, after he gave a notorious speech at Kean College, in New Jersey, Farrakhan relieved him of his duties. That speech is the source of most of the quotations that are regularly adduced against Muhammad: the references to the "Jew-nited Nations" and "Jew slumlords," the sneering Yiddish accent ("The so-called Jews have told us,

'Ve, ve, ve suffer like you'"); the abuse of the Pope ("that cracker"), Spike Lee ("Spook Lee"), and Nelson Mandela ("a fool"). Muhammad has since made a career out of taking this speech on the college lecture circuit.

Notwithstanding Muhammad's chest-thumping, it turns out that the main purpose of the Million Youth March is not to protest anything at all but to be an elaborate, if hapless, marketing scheme. This is made comically clear by its Web site. There is a feeble stab at what the marchers are supposed to be against ("Low self esteem. Conspiracies to permanently criminalize Black Youth. Negative media images") and for ("An end to Gang conflict and violence. Unity and Love among our youth and people. Full and complete reparations"). What they're really "for," though, is buying stuff from the capitalists. A few samples:

Take the Lead in Marketing Your Products & Services to the throng of Million Youth March Attendees!

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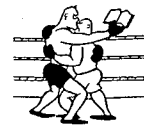
Jeez. Whatever became of "Off the pig"? "Sponsorships" are available at prices ranging up to two hundred thousand dollars. "On-site retailing"—meaning the right to sell T-shirts off a card table—can be had for two thousand. Your ad on the Web page? Two grand a month. There have been few takers, but it's the thought that counts.

While the judge deliberated, the Mayor was in Iowa, testing the Presidential waters and bragging about the dramatic decline in New York's crime rate. Back home, though, his lawyers were arguing that the instrument of that miracle—his pride and joy, the New York Police Department—wouldn't be able to handle a little old demonstration. The judge didn't

buy it. And the Mayor found himself handing Khalid Muhammad an undeserved victory. —HENDRIK HERTZBERG

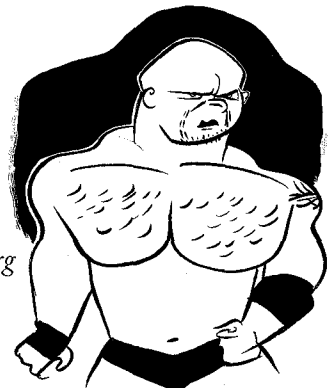
THE SPORTING SCENE

Not since Jacob took on the angel has a Jewish wrestler done so well.



RABBI IRWIN KULA and his six-year-old daughter, Talia, developed a bonding ritual over the summer. They settle down in front of the television in their Upper West Side apartment to watch professional wrestling together. They wait for the reigning World Championship Wrestling heavyweight champion, a six-foot-four-inch, two-hundred-and-eighty-five-pound muscle mass known simply as Goldberg, to appear onscreen, and they cheer as he immobilizes an overmatched foe with his signature finishing move, a malevolent body slam called the Jackhammer. Despite her youth, Talia can mimic Goldberg's post-match victory stomp. Better yet, she can answer the question "Why is this wrestling champ different from all other wrestling champs?"

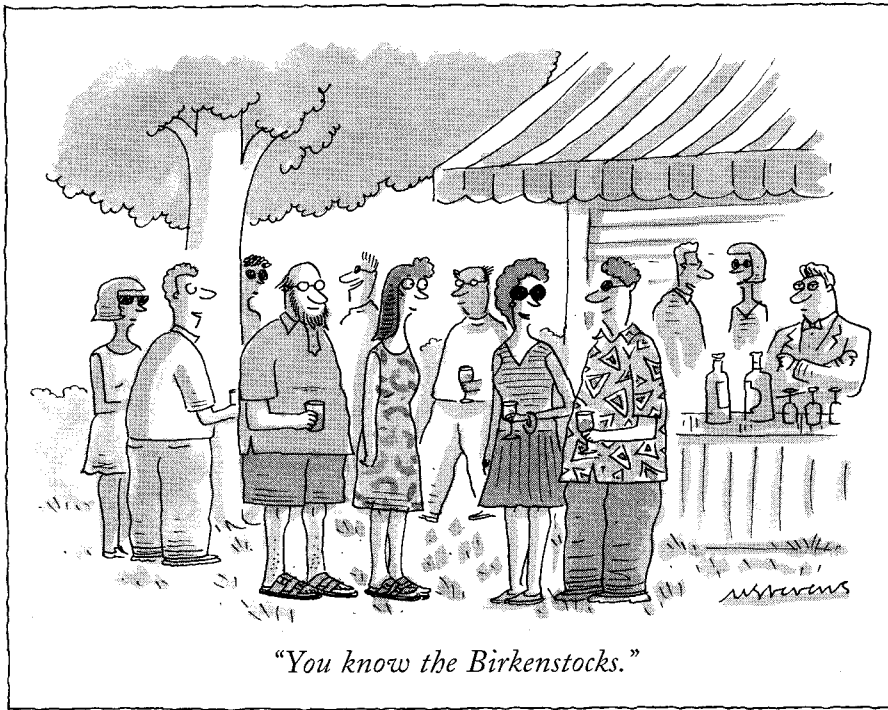
Out of the ring, the budding wrestling phenomenon is Bill Goldberg, the thirty-one-year-old son of a Harvard-educated



Bill
Goldberg

doctor and a classical musician. Goldberg began exploiting his athletic gifts in early childhood and went on to a fairly anonymous career as a defensive lineman with the Atlanta Falcons, before a severe muscle tear put him out of work and he found his true calling. "Billy never wanted to be a doctor, anyway," his father, Jed Goldberg, says.

Aspiring wrestlers usually devise pseudonyms, but Goldberg decided to go with his real handle, the one everybody who attended his Bar Mitzvah would remember him by. Shortly after making his debut, last fall, he dropped the "Bill." With an



act that's light on intelligible speech but heavy on menacing barks and trapezius muscles the size of breadfruit, Goldberg quickly moved up the ranks of W.C.W., an Atlanta-based group, started by Ted Turner, that promotes wrestling. Whenever Goldberg appeared live, whether in the Deep South or the Midwest, adoring throngs chanted "Gold-berg! Gold-berg!"

In July, Goldberg Jackhammered Hulk Hogan (real name: Terry Bollea) to take the W.C.W. title, putting him at the top of the sport, or whatever you want to call it. Rabbi Kula argues that Goldberg, by beating Hogan, who is perhaps the most popular professional wrestler of all time and is a pretty darn good Aryan symbol, unwittingly "opened a new chapter in Jewish-American history." In any case, he gave the rabbi lecture fodder. In addition to being a Goldberg booster, Rabbi Kula is president of the Center for Learning and Leadership, a New York-based think tank that ponders the meaning of Jewishness. On recent travels to speak before mostly Jewish audiences on behalf of CLAL, Kula has learned that his family isn't the only one that no longer dismisses wrestling as a goys-will-be-goys pastime. "Everybody I talk to knows Goldberg—professionals, executives, you name it," he says. "They all watch."

Before Goldberg, Kula explains, "Jews wrestled only with their identity. They wrestled with God. What this says is: 'Look at us! We're not oververbalized! We're not weak or wimpy! We're the heavyweight champ!'"

"This is also unstablizing," Kula cautions. "It's scary, because we know what it means to be Jewish when we're the victim, when everybody hates us. But what does it mean to be Jewish when everybody loves you? What does it mean to be Jewish when you're the heavyweight champion?"

But isn't this just pro wrestling?

"It's never 'just' anything," Kula says.

—DAVE MCKENNA

INK

William Weld is trading the hustings for the book-tour circuit.



THE history of political novels by politicians is a mixed one. There's Disraeli, of course, Winston Churchill, Henry Adams, and, more recently, Gary Hart and William Cohen. (Special mention also to Marilyn Quayle.) William Weld, the former two-term Republican governor of Massachusetts, who is about to publish his first novel, "Mackerel by Moonlight," isn't too impressed with his contemporary literary models. "Yeah, I read one sentence from a William Cohen book," Weld says, in his languid way, of a novel by the current Secretary of Defense. "It was something like"—and here he leans forward and growls, in a mock-Russian accent, "Igor stared at the dreaded eagle, the hated symbol of America, and then said, 'The great bear will crush you!'"

Weld's literary idols run to Nabokov and Borges. Talking to him these days, one is less likely to hear about entrepreneurial government and international trade than about omniscient narrators and trilingual puns. As a senior at Harvard, he gave the Latin oration at commencement. When he was an Assistant U.S. Attorney General at the Justice Department, he sent every U.S. Attorney in the country a copy of the section in Fowler's Modern English Usage on the proper placement of the comma.

The main literary influence on "Mackerel by Moonlight," however, seems to be George V. Higgins. The book charts the rise of a cocky young Irish federal prosecutor from Brooklyn who is tapped to run for district attorney in Massachusetts but finds himself mired in a couple of scandals. It also contains, as network flacks like to say, material ripped from today's headlines. The protagonist, Terry Mullally, has to decide at one point whether to give a pivotal witness "use immunity" or the more blanket protection of transactional immunity. When Weld, who served as the U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts in the nineteen-eighties, is asked whether a certain prosecutor went too far in giving a certain raven-haired witness transactional immunity, he shrugs and says, "You do what you have to."

Weld describes his central character as being from the wrong side of the tracks. Weld himself probably didn't even know where the tracks were when he was growing up: his ancestral estate on Long Island had a driveway a mile and a half long. He's descended from a signer of the Declaration of Independence on his mother's side, and his grandfather and great-grandfather founded the Wall Street investment house of White, Weld & Co. But Weld, whose very red face and very yellow hair give him the coloring of a carton of strawberry-banana yogurt, is an aristocrat with an Everyman manner.

Weld currently spends almost half his time in New York, working as a corporate lawyer and chairing a private equity fund that focusses on the for-profit education industry. He has a place on Central Park South, with a view of the Harlem Meer, where the novel's hero recalls fishing as a boy. On being asked whether there is anything in the book that will hurt his political future, Weld laughs and says, "Not in this one, but the second one might knock me out of the box." —RICHARD STENGEL

THE GATHERING OF THE TRIBES

Preppies vs. Indians on an old American playing field.

BY JOHN SEABROOK

I—IN THE BOX

LIKE most Native Americans, the members of the Onondaga Athletic Club, in upstate New York, play box lacrosse. Box is a faster and more violent game than the genteel sport of field lacrosse, which is played in prep schools and colleges in the United States. The Onondagan box is outdoors, and around the playing surface are weathered wooden boards and heavy-duty fencing to protect spectators from flying lacrosse balls. It is bare ground, worn but not really smooth; the dirt is coarse and abrasive. Most other Indian teams in what is known as the Senior B Box Lacrosse League play in indoor stadiums, on the defrosted surfaces of hockey rinks. The Onondaga take pride in their Spartan confines. "We'll see what happens when we get them in our box," they say after a tough loss at one of the fancier indoor places.

To get to the Onondagan box, I flew to the Syracuse airport, rented a car, jumped on I-81, and drove for twenty minutes, until I saw a large sign telling me I was now on the sovereign land of the Onondaga Nation, where no state or federal laws have jurisdiction. Most Indian reservations in the United States are quasi-sovereign territories, managed and partly subsidized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Onondaga, however, are completely independent. They govern themselves by a bicameral system set down in the Iroquois Confederacy's constitution, which was created long before the United States Constitution and is thought to have influenced both Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson.

I took the next exit, and drove along Route 11-A until I saw the box. Sitting there beside the road, with lots of open space around it that seemed ideal for field lacrosse, it suggested a bitter ceremonial reenactment of the original trauma of being corralled into reservations on ancestral lands belonging to the

first great political power north of the Rio Grande, the Iroquois.

Oren Lyons, who is the faith-keeper of the Onondaga and is a famous Native American lacrosse player, had told me to be at the box by eleven. The O.A.C. was going on a weekend road trip to Canada, and I was to ride along on the bus with them. Lacrosse, invented by Indians in northeastern North America long before the Europeans arrived, was adopted by nineteenth-century white men and turned into the sport I knew—another kind of tribal subculture, which flourishes in Eastern prep schools and elite colleges in the mid-Atlantic states. Lyons, a fit-looking sixty-eight-year-old with thick gray hair reaching halfway down his back, was teaching me about the Indian game. He was a good teacher and, I'd learned from our conversations, a skillful weaver of narratives that often began and ended with lacrosse but also brought together history, politics, spirituality, Iroquois nationalism, and the limits of private enterprise on Indian lands.

"This game is going to be a war," Lyons had told me. Tonight, the Onondaga club would be playing the Kahnawake Mohawk, in an indoor box on the Mohawk reservation, near Montreal. The Kahnawake had some dirty players, including, it was rumored on the bus, a member of the breakaway faction of Mohawk who, back in the seventies, took over an empty girls' summer camp in the Adirondacks and established a warrior enclave, the Indian version of the Montana Militia. (Eventually, the enclave moved to seven hundred acres in Altona, New York, where, in 1990, its members were involved in an eleven-day armed standoff with state troopers.) Because Oren Lyons was an outspoken opponent of the warrior enclave, as he was of any challenge to the unity of the six-nation Iroquois Confederacy (the nations are Onondaga, Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora), it was possible that some of the Mohawk players would go after some of the Onondagan players,

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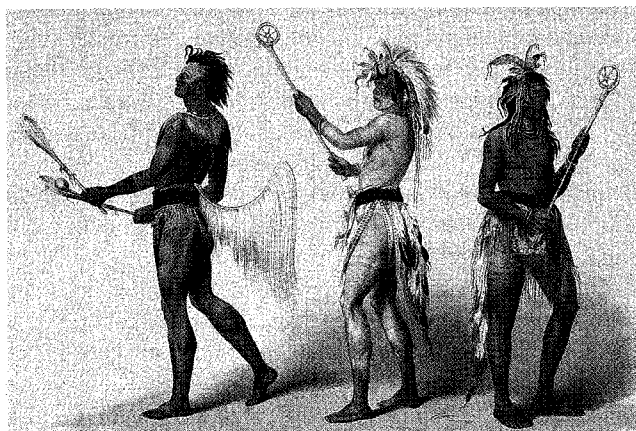
among them Lyons's son, Rex, who was a star player on the Onondagan team.

IT was a five-hour trip up to the Mohawk reservation. On the bus were thirty-three men and boys, ranging in age from thirty-eight to fifteen. In the front seats were the older men: Rex and his cousin Kent Lyons, the Onondagan goalie; a veteran defenseman known as Ace; and the team's coach, Freeman Bucktooth. "We know when we play lacrosse that we are doing what Iroquois men have always done, since the Creator gave us the game," Kent told me. Lacrosse helps to protect Iroquois culture from the larger American popular culture, which threatens to obliterate it, and which was present on the bus in many forms, from our Nike shoes to "Jerry Springer Too Hot for TV," the video that was playing on the bus's monitors. It featured censored outtakes from the controversial TV show and ended with an earnest message from Springer to the viewers, attacking his critics as enemies of free speech. Meanwhile, Kent was describing a "medicine game" that many of the men and boys on the bus had begun their season with—a kind of intramural lacrosse game played over three days by males of all ages, from thirteen to seventy-five, for the good of the community. "We play the medicine game because it helps with the hunt, even if the hunt is behind a computer screen and the forest is in an office building," Kent explained. "Everything is a circle. Lacrosse makes the circle stronger."

I asked Rex if women played lacrosse much on the reservation; in the outside world, the growth of women's lacrosse in recent years has been explosive. On the rez, Rex said, girls are discouraged by the traditionalists from playing lacrosse, because, as he put it,

the Creator didn't intend for them to play, and it's not good for the medicine.

Most of the guys on the bus were holding their sticks, tying and untying the knots in the webbing of the pockets, and spinning them in their hands. Lacrosse players seem to have a fetishistic relationship with their sticks, which are part hockey stick, part tennis racquet,



Left: Sioux lacrosse players in a nineteenth-century lithograph. Below: Two Onondagan team members with aspiring box-lacrosse players. Photograph by Max Vadukul.



and part club. In field lacrosse, sticks vary in length, depending on whether one plays attack, midfield, or defense (also known as longstick). Indian stick-makers used to supply most of the world's sticks. A hickory trunk was split, steamed, and bent at one end, and the pocket was woven of leather and catgut, which had a very particular smell in the rain. But in 1970 the Brine Company, based in Boston, introduced an aluminum stick with a molded plastic head and a rubber-and-nylon pocket, and within five years the Indian wooden-stick industry had all but disappeared.

For the youngest men on the bus, lacrosse is a chance to escape the entrenched poverty of life on the rez. What basketball is to the black urban poor,

lacrosse is to an Indian kid—his shot at a college scholarship and a good education. One of the brightest prospects on the Onondagan's team was the coach's son, Drew Bucktooth, a shy, handsome kid sitting a few rows behind me. He could have his pick of full scholarships at lacrosse schools like Syracuse, Loyola, and Johns Hopkins, but, at his father's insistence, he is spending this year playing in Canada's junior hockey league, with the hope of being drafted into the N.H.L. and making some big money. If that doesn't work out, though, he retains his eligibility for college lacrosse.

Rex is thirty-five. He's a bit beaten up, but he still has a good burst of speed near the "crease," the circular area that surrounds the goal. He and his family live down the road from his father and next door to his mother. There are a couple of lacrosse nets in the back yard where his kids play. Both he and Kent do the high-altitude construction work for which the Iroquois are famous; they have jobs as union glaziers. They also play in a rock-and-roll band called White Boy and

the Wagon Burners, after an insult that a white Canadian player once shouted at Rex when he had been repeatedly scored on by Rex and his teammates: "You ain't nothing but wagon burners anyway." Both Rex and Kent got lacrosse scholarships to Syracuse University, but neither of them graduated. When I asked Rex about that, he said the problem had been the "frat boys" whom he and Kent met on and off the lacrosse field. He told me there were some ugly incidents between them, but he added, "I wasn't prepared for college. Not mature enough. I wanted to keep my rock-and-roll band; there were just too many distractions. It wasn't only the frat boys—it was me."

Rex's college experience is typical of that of Native American lacrosse play-

ers: got the scholarship, couldn't stick it. Although lacrosse offers Indians a chance to get off the reservation, it also helps to keep them on it, by reinforcing the native culture that makes it hard for them to assimilate at universities. Roy Simmons, who coached lacrosse for forty-one years at Syracuse University and retired only this year, told me recently, "Of all the Indians I have seen walk through my door on lacrosse scholarships, maybe a third have graduated. Most of them don't feel comfortable here, and leave after a year or so. I remember I had a kid come here from the rez and I went with him up to the high-rise where he had been assigned a room. He put down his bag, which had a few simple things in it, and looked around at his new white roommate's stereo and books and the nice goose-down bedspread, and then he pointed to the wall and said, 'What's that?' I said, 'That's a thermostat.' 'What's it do?' he asked. You know, he was uncomfortable. He was gone pretty soon." Rex's wife, Xina, wants their sons to go to a college far away, so they won't be tempted to come home on weekends.

I asked Rex if he was worried about politically motivated violence against him tonight. He shrugged. He was bringing along his wooden lacrosse stick in case things got out of hand. Today's aluminum and titanium sticks are easier to throw and catch with, but a wooden stick still hurts the most when you whack somebody with it. Ace said he wished he still had his wooden stick. He had recently placed it in the coffin of a friend who died of alcoholism at the age of thirty-eight.

THE bus wound along the state roads of the ice-storm-devastated forests of upper New York, the country between Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence River, which is thought

to be where lacrosse was invented, by the Eastern Algonquins. It was known to the Iroquois as *takitcharwei*, which means "bump hips." The game was spread south by the Cherokee, who called it "little brother of war," and west by the Sioux. Lacrosse games sometimes lasted as long as three days, with goals as much as a mile or two apart, as many as a hundred players on a team, and no side boundaries, like the game of Capture the Flag that kids at summer camp now play in those same forests.

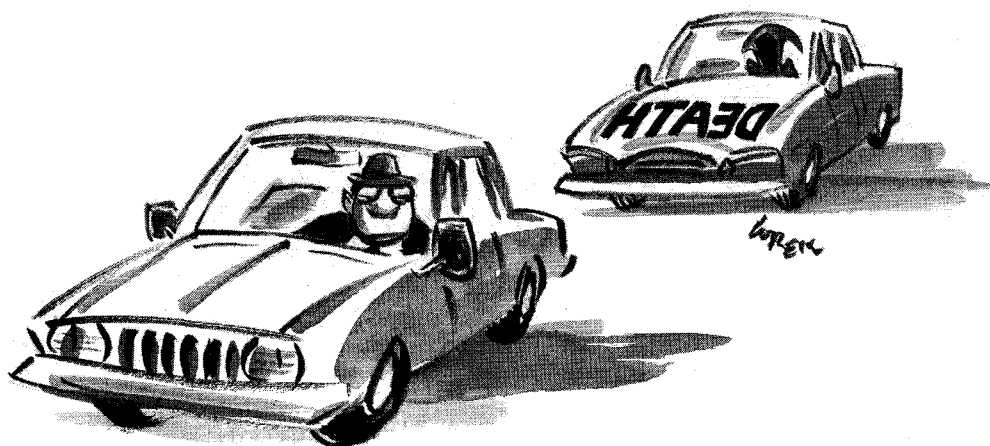
The French term *la crosse* was first applied to the Indians' sticks in the sixteenth-thirties by a Jesuit missionary who lived among the Huron. The most famous game of the eighteenth century, as described by Francis Parkman in "The Conspiracy of Pontiac," was played between two tribes, the Ojibwa and the Ozaagii, in front of Fort Michilimackinac, a British encampment on the shores of Lake Michigan, on June 4, 1763. The British soldiers had thrown open the fort's gates in order to see the game better and were having a good time watching the Indians beat one another senseless (which is what some white people still enjoy doing on a Saturday night in the Senior B Box Lacrosse League), when, at a prearranged signal, the Indians flung the lacrosse ball through the fort's gate. Switching from lacrosse mode to war mode (an easy transition in those days), they killed most of the soldiers—some on the spot and the others later, slowly torturing them to death in the forest.

The transformation of *takitcharwei* into the game that college students call "lax" occurred during the eighteenth-sixties. The seminal figure was a Montreal dentist, Dr. William George Beers, one of those slightly creepy Victorian games enthusiasts who may have had

more influence on our sports culture than was healthy. For lacrosse, Beers established boundaries, limited the number of players per side, set play to a clock, replaced the Indians' deer-skin ball with a hard rubber one, and drew up rational rules in keeping with Victorian ideals of social progress. Just as "civilization tamed the manners and habits of the Indians," Beers wrote, so lacrosse was "gradually divested of its radical rudeness and brought to a more sober sport." The game quickly spread to the United States; in 1877, New York University and Manhattan College played the first collegiate game, in Central Park. (Princeton and Rutgers had played the first collegiate football game only eight years earlier.) The sport caught on in cloistered pockets of the Northeast, where it can still be found—from the hardscrabble blue-collar lacrosse towns in upstate New York to the public high schools of west-central Long Island, and on to the lush greenswards of Baltimore preppiedom. While football has long since outgrown its folk origins to become a national spectacle, in which much of the country's melting pot is represented, lacrosse remains mostly an East Coast, mostly white game, and is largely unknown in Middle America.

The Indian game, being without boundaries or clocks, favored speed, stamina, and daring individual play. The white game favored organization, specialization, and strategy. Before Beers changed the rules, the Indians routinely beat the whites at lacrosse with their more athletic style of play. Professional Indian lacrosse teams were a common sight in the eighteen-seventies, but in 1880 Indians were banned from international competition, on the ground that they were accepting money to play in the Canadian lacrosse leagues.

Beers, in his rule-making, did not act purely in the interests of the game, as Rule IX, Section 6, of the original lacrosse rule book makes plain. It states, "No Indian must play in a match for a white club, unless previously agreed upon." Thomas Vennum, the author of "American Indian Lacrosse," writes, "The rule was a blatant, segregationist, 'separate but equal' clause, which would eventually and effectively bar



ROMANCING FERRET

Ferret colored her fur
And pouted. The toads danced.
Their bellies bounced and their eyes
Bugged at the opportunity.

"No!" cried Ferret. "Your slip-skin
And carbuncles will clog my coat,
Your breath is heavy in
My land-bound feathers,

My freedom should not go
To one of you. You will not do."
Departing toads trailed their grease
And left their mud at her roadside.

Ferret cleaned herself again. This time,
Trout found her face at the river bottom
A thing of beauty. His gift
Was weed and caddis fly. She almost drowned

So loaded was she by his generosity.
The larva still in her gullet,
She struggled for the riverbank. Matted, wet,
And uglified, she came face to face with stoat.

Stoat sneered at first. His oracle was sleeping
And his candle was out. He saw only
The weed-stuck spines of silt and clay,
And heard the crack of shell

In her throat-back when she spoke.
In his pity, he thought her pretty anyway,
And washed her off to find himself
Faced with his own kind.

—FRIEDA HUGHES

Indians from participation in international lacrosse competition for more than a century."

Shut out of the field game, the Indians took up box lacrosse, which was invented in Canada, in 1930, by three white promoters who were looking for a way to make money with hockey rinks in the summertime. Box is a six-man, hockeylike sport, very different from the flowing, ten-man game of field lacrosse. It features slick stickwork, no-look passes, behind-the-back shots, and a thirty-second shot clock that makes for lots of action. There is also plenty of brutal checking and fighting, as there was in the old Indian game. The most famous white lacrosse players in the world are the Canadian twins Paul and Gary Gait,

who grew up playing box in Vancouver, and they have inspired a new generation of potential field-lacrosse stars to play a flashier, Magic Johnson-style game.

THAT night in the Kahnawake box, several of the Mohawk did seem to have it in for Rex Lyons. Early in the game, the younger O.A.C. players were hanging back, not wanting to challenge for position in front of the crease. Rex exhorted them by trying a run through the middle and received a vicious slash on one shoulder. In retaliation, Coach Bucktooth sent in Lab, the Onondaga's "goonie"—a beefy guy whom lots of teams bring along in the Senior B League, in case there's a rumble—and Lab made efficient work of

the guy who had clubbed Rex. He threw off one glove, grabbed the Mohawk's jersey with that hand, punched his face mask with the gloved hand until the man's helmet came off, hit him in the face a couple of times, then pulled his jersey up over his head and slammed him down onto the concrete—all in about five seconds.

Now the arena was thick with the menace of impending violence. As the second period began, the Mohawk face-off man came up to the Onondagan face-off man, drew a finger across his jugular vein, and said furiously, "I'm going to cut your *tro-o-at*."

Midway through the period, Rex again made a dash across the crease. One of the biggest of the Mohawk players spread his hands wide on his stick and, without making even a pretense of going for the ball, smashed the stick over Rex's head. Rex fell hard on the concrete floor, bouncing a little as he hit, and lay there face down for a few minutes. Eventually, he got up and limped back to the bench.

The game ended 10-6 Mohawk. Afterward, some of the older Onondaga had a reasonably friendly drink in the bar with some of the Mohawk players. They came out to the bus in fifteen minutes. But when Coach Bucktooth called the roll a few of the younger guys were missing. Someone said he'd heard them talking about going to a bar up the road. Rex, limping badly, went outside, found the missing guys in a girl's car, and brought them back, and Coach Bucktooth gave everyone a lecture about the importance of staying focussed for tomorrow night's game. Box had been a way of ritualistically confronting a certain threat of disorder—a Saturday night of drinking and mayhem—but had not completely exorcised this demon. It now seemed to be lurking somewhere in the dark at the back of the bus, where some of the younger guys were whispering about getting beer and bringing it back to the Best Western.

II—ON THE FIELD

THE two great tribes of lacrosse enthusiasts in the United States—the Iroquois and the white Easterners—almost never play against each other. A rare exception took place

in July, in Baltimore, when the Iroquois Nationals, an all-star team made up of the best players from the Six Nations, took on Team U.S.A., a dream team of white American players, at World Lacrosse 1998, the sport's world championship.

It was the Iroquois Nationals' third appearance at the championships, which come around every four years, since the ban against Indians in international competition was lifted, in 1990. They were one of eleven teams at the games, and they ended up in fourth place, behind the United States, Canada, and Australia, and ahead of England (whom the Iroquois beat in an exciting 10-9 game, clinched by Rex with sixteen seconds to go) and the six other lacrosse-playing nations—Japan, Germany, Sweden, Wales, Scotland, and the Czech Republic. The Lyons family was represented in force. Not only was Rex there but Rex's son Monte was playing in the Under-Fifteen tournament; Rex's cousins Kent and Scottie were in the Masters; and Rex's father, Oren Lyons, was in the Grandmasters. Oren would also carry the Indian flag and lend spiritual support to the Nationals.

Homewood Field, at Johns Hopkins University, where the games were held, is the heartland of white lacrosse in the United States. The game is especially popular in the old-money suburbs to the north of Baltimore, like Cockeysville and Lutherville-Timonium; in Baltimore, the prep schools actually recruit lacrosse players from the grade schools. After prep school, the players move on to lacrosse colleges like Hopkins and Bucknell and Princeton. (This year's Princeton team, which was coached by the Team U.S.A. coach, Bill Tierney, and won the N.C.A.A. championship for the third year in a row, had five students from Baltimore's Gilman School on it—a cozy Amtrak relationship between Baltimore and Princeton that goes back at least as far as "This Side of Paradise.") Over the years, many postcollegiate lacrosse players have found employment in the Baltimore wing of the investment firm of Alex Brown, which used to be run by a stalwart member of the lacrosse fraternity, Buzzy Krongard (now the top adviser to the director of the C.I.A.). Thanks in part to lacrosse, the Baltimore preppies I know have managed to survive with their sense

of entitlement more or less intact; for better or worse, they're not beaten down like New York preppies, who have had to compete in the remorseless meritocracy of Manhattan.

But the Baltimore lacrosse elite, not unlike the Indians, is a group in danger of being colonized by the surrounding popular culture. The code of amateurism, which is the closest thing to a spiritual ideal that their game has, is in the process of being transformed by the commercialization of sports in America. "The problem with lacrosse is that you can't make money doing it," Darren Lowe, a twenty-seven-year-old Team U.S.A. attackman, told me. Amateurism, which once served the ruling class as a way of excluding the people it didn't want to play with, now excludes the younger members of the ruling class from the ESPN sports culture that they want to belong to. The Team U.S.A. players I spoke to appeared a bit sheepish about not being able to make a living from lacrosse; not getting paid for your sport, it seems, places you lower in the status hierarchy than professional athletes. Things have changed since the days when the Indian players were banned from international competition *because* they earned money playing lacrosse.

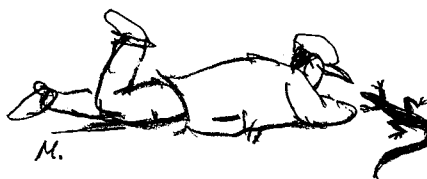
Lowe, the son of a lacrosse coach, went to a public school in Mineola, Long Island, which is one of the prosperous postwar bedroom communities where lacrosse took root in the nineteen-fifties and became part of the delivery mechanism of the good life. He said, "When I told my college adviser I wanted to go to Brown, he said, 'Brown where? California?' I had eleven-hundred S.A.T.s and an eighty-five average." But Lowe got into Brown, where he was an All-American; his brother Kevin was an All-American at Princeton. After college, lacrosse helped get Darren a job at Lehman Brothers and Kevin a job at Merrill Lynch. "There's definitely a fraternity of lacrosse guys available who will help you get jobs on Wall Street," Lowe said. The business of bond-brokering in particular, which Lowe is in, is full of

lacrosse jocks. He estimates that twenty per cent of the people on the foreign-reserve bond desk at Lehman Brothers are lacrosse players, adding, "I would say that lacrosse and crew are the two biggest sports networks on the Street."

ON the eve of the Iroquois Nationals' Sunday game against Team U.S.A., Oren Lyons and I visited the lacrosse minipark that had been set up next to Homewood Field. It was a hot night. Loose-limbed lax jocks roamed the Homewood grounds in packs of three or four, their tribal allegiances to such local prep schools as Gilman or St. Paul's or Boys' Latin proclaimed on their T-shirts. Smooth-skinned girls in tartan skirts and sleeveless blouses with the collars turned up were prowling in posses. Some boys walked around bare-chested, their shucked-off T-shirts hanging from their belts, dish-rag style, and all of them wearing the same kind of knee-length khaki shorts and Teva sandals. The younger ones were lean, but the college graduates were getting a bit stout from all the beer drinking and barbecue that go with Baltimore lacrosse. Both the boys and the girls carried sticks. Around Baltimore, kids grow up with sticks in the umbrella stand next to the front door. They play on the big lawn with their "golden," the same breed of dog that's often seen wearing a red bandanna at the game.

"All this stuff," Lyons said, indicating piles of lacrosse merchandise for sale everywhere. He picked up one of the Warrior Company's titanium sticks, which, according to the accompanying promotional literature, was "precision engineered with Aerospace Grade Titanium using a proprietary seamless extrusion process," and which promised to give the stick's user "the Means to Dominate." On the side of the big Warrior tent was a picture of the president of the company, a twenty-seven-year-old Princeton graduate named David Morrow, who was also playing longstick for Team U.S.A. and had obtained the exclusive right to promote his products at the World Games. Around here, lacrosse is a medicine game, too: it brings good fortune to its community. The difference is that the Indians' medicine doesn't work so well outside the reservation.

Lyons seemed aware of this problem—of the need to preserve a cultural



identity and at the same time shop it around in the larger marketplace in a way that benefits the people to whom it belongs. When we sat down at one of the barbecue places and a senior official in the New York State Republican Party stopped by to say hello, Lyons started telling him about a new complex he was hoping to persuade the Six Nations to build on Onondagan land. "It *won't* be a casino," Lyons said. "It'll be a theme park, though we don't call it that. A place to showcase our heritage, and teach democracy, on our terms. Everyone's running around like gaming is a panacea for everything, when it's not." That there is only one casino on native lands in New York state—Turning Stone, run by the Oneida—is due in no small part to Lyons's powerful opposition to gambling. He had told me earlier that he sees casinos as the single greatest threat to the Iroquois Confederacy. "With casinos—instead of tradition, which makes you strong—people only care about money, which makes you weak," he said.

After the official had gone, Lyons mulled over the possibility that by building the complex, which would be a boost to the economy of central New York, he might be able to persuade the state to settle some of the Iroquois land claims in the Indians' favor. In his thoughts, I sensed, a political version of Team U.S.A. vs. the Iroquois was already being played.

BEFORE taking the field against Team U.S.A. the following afternoon, the Iroquois Nationals gathered under a big tree outside the Homewood Field Stadium and built a small fire of twigs and bark. Chief Paul Waterman, the grandfather of Gewas Schindler, one of the stars of the Nationals, produced some loose tobacco and cupped it in his hands. It was then passed from player to player around the twenty-six-member team. Thomas Vennum writes, in "American Indian Lacrosse," that Cherokee conjurors used to scratch players with rattlesnake fangs, to purify them, and that Creek players were rubbed with a liquid made of "the track of a wolf and the burrow of a crayfish," which allowed them to perform amazing athletic feats. Today, the Iroquois sprinkled the tobacco on the fire and offered a traditional prayer, invoking the help of this tree, the tree's roots, the



"O.K., maybe it's not as exciting as the old clubs, but I doubt that Giuliani will try to close it down."

sun, the fields, the birds, the four winds, and all their ancestors to protect them from injury and to make them strong. The Iroquois jerseys were purple with yellow-and-white trim; they had a traditional geometric design of a wampum belt on one sleeve and the word "Brine," the supplier of the uniforms, in large letters on the back.

About seventy-five feet away, their opponents, wearing red-white-and-blue uniforms, were posing for photographs on the steps of the Newton H. White Athletic Center. "Look, sweetheart," a lacrosse dad said to his little girl. "They're representing our country." Since the United States is far and away the dominant lacrosse nation in the world, the team is also representing the sport of lacrosse as a whole. U.S. Lacrosse, the sport's

national governing body, is trying to make lacrosse a bigger presence on the sports landscape, by employing the same techniques that Team U.S.A. would be using on the field: teamwork, strategy, central control. The money to pay for this expansion comes from an annual fee that U.S. Lacrosse began collecting this year from players at any organized level, from youth to club—between fifteen and forty dollars per person per year, which is about what soccer collects from soccer moms and dads.

But the same clannishness that breeds such an intense following among lacrosse players and their families also works against lacrosse in its efforts to grow. Lacrosse will have to compete for fans' interest with made-for-TV sports like arena football and women's beach

volleyball. History, context (the smell of barbecued "pit beef" drifting over from the concession stands behind the bleachers), and Wasp nepotism don't come through very clearly on cable. Box lacrosse has some of the right elements for TV (the flashy moves and the violence), but promoting box would alienate the lacrosse establishment, who see it as a lowbrow version of the field game.

At game time, five o'clock, the Baltimore sun was still burning down on the artificial Homewood turf, making it hot to the touch. Oren Lyons was standing by the Iroquois bench.

"Are you going to use that wooden stick?" a white boy asked Lyons, pointing to one of six hickory longsticks that Alfie Jacques, a native stick-maker, had made specially for the Iroquois Nationals.

"Yes," Lyons said.

"Is it true the Indians and the Americans don't like each other?" the boy asked.

Lyons said that it was not true, though they might not be too friendly for the next couple of hours.

"One, two, three, *Iroquois!*" The team members broke their final huddle and took their positions on the bright-green field: three attackmen, three midfielders, three defensemen, and the goalie.

Field lacrosse is a game of circles and lines—the natural religion of the Indians overlaid with the capitalistic religion of the white men. When the attackmen and midfielders jog-trot like hunters around the goal, looking for shots as the defensemen poke-check them with their longsticks, the game looks Indian, but when Team U.S.A. takes positions and whips the ball efficiently around the crease, running complex set plays, the game looks white. Lacrosse combines the stick skills of hockey, the two-on-two, pick-and-roll play of basketball, the flow of soccer, and the field generalship of football. (Unlimited substitutions are allowed.) In field lacrosse, you can take three or four minutes on offense, as in football, or you can play an up-tempo game of thirty-second possessions with quick shots, as in basketball. "Partly because of its origins as a mix of

North American cultures," I was told by Jim Grube, who is a former football and lacrosse coach at Middlebury College, "lacrosse is a true hybrid, which can be played at either end of the sports continuum."

Team U.S.A. won the face-off and began slinging the ball around in a circle, from the center out to the wing, then around behind the goal and out to the other wing, then back to the center. The Indians looked as though they were having trouble adjusting to the wide-open field: they were bunched somewhat awkwardly as their opponents slid toward the crease and looked for passes. The U.S.A. scored two goals quickly, and it looked as if the game would be a rout. The crowd cheered them loudly. A couple of white kids were rooting for the Indians, perhaps to piss their parents off, but for the most part the fans were solidly behind Team U.S.A.

"Come on, Iroquois!" shouted three Indian women wearing a lot of purple. "Be strong! You can run right through them!"

A white boy in a baseball cap, sitting next to me, looked at his buddy and said, "Yeah, right."

One of the Team U.S.A. attackmen tried some fancy stickwork and lost the ball to the Iroquois, who came down the field quickly and scored a goal. They won the ensuing face-off, and Gewas Schindler scored another goal on a dive into the crease. (The day before, I was in the press box when Schindler scored against Team Canada, and one of the announcers wasn't sure how to pronounce "Gewas." "Just call him Chief," another announcer advised.)

Coach Tierney sent in the mid-fielder Jesse Hubbard, who grew up across the street from St. Alban's, the Washington prep school that is Vice-President Gore's alma mater. Some girls in the stands started a cheer—"Jes-se Hubbard, Jes-se Hub-bard." Team U.S.A. scored again. "Yesss!" the kid in the baseball cap cried, pumping his clenched fist. But the Iroquois got the ball back, and Rex Lyons broke hard across the crease—the same box move I'd seen him get clobbered for in Canada. This time, he scored.

Early in the second period, the score was tied, 3-3. Then it seemed to dawn

on the Iroquois that they were playing even with the best team in the world, and a sort of shyness overtook them. The U.S.A. fired the ball around the crease, seeming to mesmerize the younger Indian players, and shot it into the net. They were deadly.

By the end of the third period, the score was 14-7, U.S.A. With the game out of reach, and the only remaining question being how bad it was going to get, one of the Iroquois players had pushed one of the U.S.A. players, the U.S.A. guy pushed back, and then, after a moment's pause, the Iroquois player hit the U.S.A. player in the face mask. The U.S.A. player fell to the ground, clutching his head. There were angry shouts from the fans at this intrusion of box into their field game. A man next to me, leaning against the chain-link fence that separated the fans from the field, yelled, "Get the animals out of the game!"

IN the end, the score was 20-8—a respectable performance by the 'Quois. Afterward, Oren Lyons walked back to the hotel carrying the All Nations' staff, a scythe-shaped hickory stick with six golden-eagle feathers along the top crook and more eagle feathers down the shaft. It was attracting attention from lacrosse-stick-twirling white boys who were running around the outside of the field.

"Is that real?" one of them asked.

"That's our flag," Lyons said simply.

"Is it real?" the boy asked again. In a culture that knows its Indian heritage mostly through Chief Wahoo and tomahawk chops at Braves games, the real thing loses its talismanic power. It's just better gear.

The boy ran off to join his friends. Lyons said to me, "Sixteen million people under that flag." I asked what he meant, and he said that he was referring to the sixteen million Indians who had died as a result of the European conquest of North America.

As we crossed the street, Lyons said, "You know, the Indians invented baseball, too."

"Invented baseball!" I exclaimed.

"Oh, yeah," he said. "Baseball began with a man running back and forth between two bases, and the object was to throw the ball *at* him to get him out. That's an old Indian game. But white people aren't ready to hear that yet." ♦



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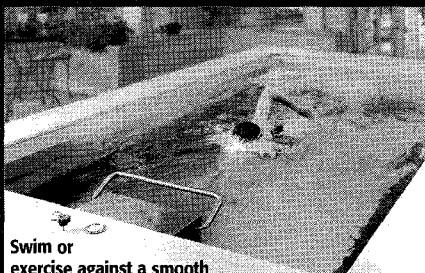
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- 18 ACNE (anag.)
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- 1 INGRID (anag.)
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- 3 L + IMPLY
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CASUAL

HARRY TRUMAN'S VERY SECRET DIARY

*The story that asks the question: If things are
always the same, why are things so very different?*

BY GEORGE W. S. TROW

INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI. July 31, 1998. Harry S. Truman, an older man of a hundred and fourteen years' life experience, sits rocking on a sweet old wooden porch. A wind stirs an eddy of *autumn leaves*. A mischievous gust catches a copy of the Independence *Clarion* that has been resting on President Truman's lap and blows it across the porch. We see headlines: "BUBBA IN THE HAMP-TONS . . . SPIELBERG . . . BASINGER . . . BALDWIN."

President Truman, with the acceptance that comes with age, does not bestir himself but, rather, allows the paper to blow into a nearby gutter, where it decomposes before our very eyes.

He is holding an old but well-oiled leather volume. We see the legend "Very Secret Diary," in gold letters. "I remember," he says, and then we hear his voice as we watch him flip through the pages.

SATURDAY: Well, Bess and I are at the luxurious Greenbrier resort for the élite, in West Virginia, a state I thought I never wanted to see again, but this isn't like West Virginia at all, it's just like "Gone with the Wind," and you've never seen so many really top people all in the same place. Proud to be an American. We are growing one hell of an economy, what with Big Steel (U.S.) and Little Steel (Bethlehem) and the finest railroad system in the world. Real glad to see Bob Young, who just

took the New York Central Railroad away from the Vanderbilts, and Bob Hope, who is the nicest guy (not to say Bob Young isn't), and Bob (Hope, not Young) promised me that this afternoon we could play golf with—Dear Very Secret Diary, imagine me, your own



"Dear Very Secret Diary, and my Only True Friend, and the reason I say that is that after last night I don't know about Bess."

little Harry, writing this—the *Duke of Windsor*! Bob says not to worry, just call him Sir (I don't have to call him Your Majesty, because I'm an *American*), and then he might ask me to call him David, and then I said, "Just don't call him late to dinner," which Bob thought was very funny and had never heard before. Bob has the nicest life I ever saw anybody have, and, Very Secret Diary, I can tell you that I wish *we—you and I*—had a life just like it, with just one or two teeny differences, and maybe we can, but don't tell *anybody*.

One reason Bob and I made close friends so fast is that he *really* respects the military, and, after all, I pushed the button on the Japs, which *he* for one doesn't forget. I *almost* told him about the H-bomb, and so forth, but

BARRY BUTT

my nemesis, Tom Dewey, would probably have a Special Prosecutor after me on that one, too (however that works; *damn* Tom Dewey anyway), so I just said, "You ain't seen nothin' yet," which he thought was very funny and had never heard before.

MONDAY, ON BOB YOUNG'S PRIVATE TRAIN: Well, it's all over, and we have to go back to Washington. Bess and I just sat on the train like two sad children watching all the ticky-tacky houses people have and thinking the same thing. (Thank God, Bess and I always think alike, and there is never any distance between us, even when there is some little difficulty that comes up that no one could help its coming up and anyone would overlook in a friend.) So Bess said wasn't the Greenbrier lovely, and I said it sure beats the pants off Independence. And she said imagine America's No. 1 interior decorator, Dorothy Draper, ever coming out to a place like Independence to do over a house—*huh!* She said "huh" real loud in a way that I completely understood, because there is no distance between Bess and me even when some silly problem comes up that's the most natural thing in the world for a man. (I hear the Deweys have a *terrible marriage*.) But sometimes I think that I'm the luckiest man in the world, Dear Very Secret Diary, and that my luck's *never* going to run out, because *just then* Dorothy Draper herself came by (she was on Bob Young's Private Train, too) and she stopped and chatted, and was just the nicest, friendliest person, even if she is the biggest interior decorator in New York, and knows people even Bob Young doesn't know.

P.S. Over the weekend, Bob Young promised to tell me all about other people who want to take prominent industries away from the people who have them. I said fine with me.

WEDNESDAY: Well, of all the hell-fool things. Marshall was just in here and just as bold as brass tells me we have to Rebuild Europe. I told *him* that they could damned well pull themselves up by their own bootstraps just the way a certain young man from Independence, Missouri, did to the point where he's just been at the Greenbrier resort, which has just been completely redone

by Miss Dorothy Draper, in case he didn't know, and went down and came back on Mr. Robert Young's Private Train. I could tell I got him with that one, because he just stood there and stared like a Cigar Store Indian, didn't have one word to say to that at all except he would mention it another time.

WEDNESDAY (THE NEXT ONE): Well, here I am at Hank Luce's Media Conference, Dear Very Secret Diary, and I might as well tell you how I got here. Yesterday I come into the Oval Office, just like always, though a little bored to tell you the truth, and wondering if maybe Dorothy Draper would like to come down and see if there's anything she could do with it, when one of the Dewey crowd comes in bold as brass and sets out to hand me one of those subpoenas, and I tell him, "Fine, my F. & F. file hasn't been getting a workout lately," and he just stands there like a Cigar Store Indian because no one ever told him that "F. & F." means "File and Forget," so he didn't even get the humor. (That's why the Deweys have a terrible marriage: can't take a joke, and don't understand a simple natural thing that a ten-year-old kid would understand and forget about—well, maybe not ten, but a fourteen-year-old kid would.)

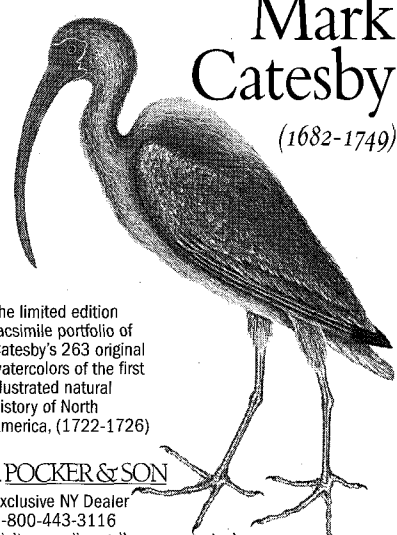
And then, Dear Very Secret Diary, because, as you well know, I'm a foxy article and quick on my feet, I said, "Besides, I have to go to Hank Luce's Media Conference at Exclusive Sun Valley," *the which you probably haven't even heard of*, I almost added but didn't.

So here I am, and I must say it sure is swell, and makes Independence look like Bombay, India. Hank's wife, Clare, was very friendly and said that in his heart Hank didn't like Tom Dewey, either. "Just like the little man on top of the wedding cake," she said, which went over my head until she explained that she meant *any* wedding cake. Clare said Hank wanted to brainstorm with me about a new magazine that would be more about People Like Us (Clare and Hank and me) and less about boring world news and so forth that he is forced to put in *Time*, and I said that's the kind of magazine I would like to read myself.

All the top people are here, like Bob Young, of the New York Central Railroad, and Juan Trippe, of Pan Am,

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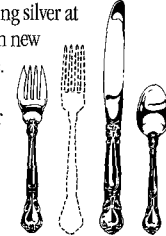


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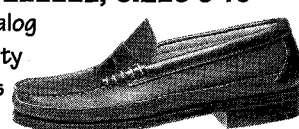


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which is of course our flagship airline, and that makes it the Washington Monument of the future. Juan's friends (of whom I am one now) call him Juanito. Juanito was explaining that there are too many airlines, which makes it dangerous, and that we should do something about it, and I said sure. Some of them (the airlines), he explained, are run by upstarts, like Tom Dewey, who are in it for spite, and to make things look bad for real men who aren't afraid to take chances like dropping the Big One on the Japs.

Then things got really busy and noisy, and I lost track of Bob and Juanito, and Hank Luce introduced me to a Madame Chiang woman. Boy, what a piece of work *she* was. Kept on saying we had to "firebomb the bamboo drapery," but I didn't really listen because she was real old and not my type. Then she started telling me about Funding in Formosa, which was a more interesting topic, but I couldn't keep my mind on it because guess who was there—Lana Turner.

THURSDAY: Dear Very Secret Diary, and my Only True Friend, and the reason I say that, Dear and Very Secret Diary, is that after last night I don't know about Bess. And as for Our Friend (and you know the one I mean), I'm not sure he's on our side anymore.

The hard thing about these Media Conferences, Dear Very Secret Diary, is there's Good Tail all over, and Our Friend (you know the one I mean) can't handle it. And the worst of it is I got in trouble by following Bess's advice that, if I had to, at least do it with one of our own social class.

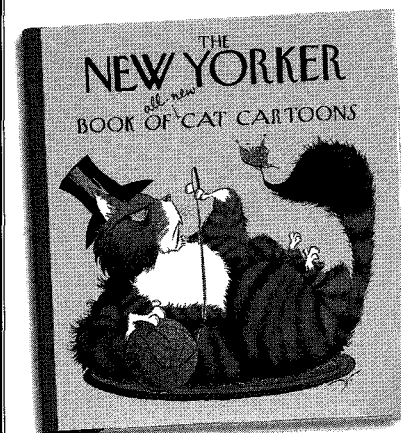
I think I told you Lana Turner was here. I just casually mentioned to Bob Young, who is head of the New York Central Railroad—which is an American Institution you can trust, and which can never go out of business, unlike some fly-by-nighters—that I wouldn't mind the chance of meeting her, as she is a person who raised herself by the bootstraps, like myself, to be one of my own social class. He said sure, and over she comes and Our Friend says the Big Hello, and Bob sits down with Lana, and says that Lana is an old and dear friend, and someone you can talk in front of, and U.S. Steel wants to take over Bethlehem, and can I square it with

Sherman. I say, "Sure, and if he doesn't play ball I'll fire the bastard," and I can tell Lana is real impressed, which, to tell you the truth, is what I had in mind. So Bob leaves, and I ask her if she would please slob on my knob because under the circumstances at present I have to stick to my own kind and not go catting around with everyone. She said no, but that isn't all. Five minutes later, up in a special room reserved for just the crème de la crème, what do I see but Lana doing the bellboy. But that isn't all. I got mad as hell, which I'm known for, and which has always worked in the past, and hit the bellboy, who is not of my own social class, and although I think I can get Marshall and them to square the house detective, and while Miss Turner is a person of the highest status like myself, like I say, I don't think I can square it with the bellboy.

THURSDAY (THE NEXT ONE): Well, I was wrong. Bob Young got him a job as conductor on the Twentieth Century Limited, which is the most famous single train in the U.S.A. and an American Institution that can never go out of business, unlike some, so everything's O.K.

FRIDAY: The trouble is I couldn't square it with Sherman, so U.S. Steel can't do what it wanted to do with Bethlehem Steel. Called Bob Young to explain that Sherman is an Act, not a guy, and Bob Young said any fool knows it's an Act, not a guy, and I said if Sherman was a guy I would have fired him before I let him talk back to me. I was feeling a little blue, so I called Miss Turner, but a foreigner said she was "indisponible." I made her spell it out so I could ask Marshall what it meant. Called Marshall and asked him if *indisponible* was code for something and could he look it up in the code book. He said a Spanish dictionary was more like it, and it meant "not available." I called Bob Young up just to chat, but he had to go out of town. Feeling a little blue, but at least I'm not some buttoned-up twerp like Dewey who's never been to the high spots like the Greenbrier with good friends like Bob Young and Miss Turner, although that was out West. Plus he's got a terrible marriage where there isn't any mutual understanding about silly little things that are completely natural to a man. ♦

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THE UNIMAGINED

A pygmy and a doctor wrestle with Rwanda's demons.

BY PHILIP GOUREVITCH

IN the southern Rwandan hill town of Gikongoro, the electricity had failed for the night; the Guest House bar was lit by half a dozen candles, and the eyes of the three soldiers who invited me to drink glowed the color of blood oranges. A single glass of beer was passed, from which I was the last to sip—a ritual signifying that I was not to be poisoned. The soldiers were too drunk for conversation, but a civilian in their party, a man in a shiny black training suit, appeared determined to demonstrate his sobriety. He sat stiffly straight, with his arms folded over his chest and his eyes fixed in a hard squint, aloof and appraising. He asked my name in stern, robotic English, each syllable precise and abrupt. I told him “Philip.”

“Ah.” He clutched my hand. “Like in Charles Dickens.”

“That’s Pip,” I said.

“Great Expectations,” he pronounced. He dropped my hand. His lips bunched up tight as he considered me with his humorless stare. Then he said, “I am a pygmy from the jungle. But I learned English from an Anglican bishop.” He didn’t say his name.

The soldier beside me, who had been leaning forward, propped on the upturned barrel of his machine gun, fell suddenly into his own lap, asleep, then jerked awake and smiled and drank some more. The pygmy took no notice. “I have a principle,” he announced. “I believe in the principle of *Homo sapiens*. You get me?”

I took a guess. “You mean that all humanity is one?”

“That is my theory,” the pygmy said. “That is my principle. But I have a problem. I must marry a white woman.”

“Why not?” I said. Then, after a moment, I said, “But why, if we’re all the same? Who cares what color your wife is?”

“She must be a white woman,” the pygmy said. “Only a white woman can understand my universal principle of

empty hand. A sour expression came over his face—an air of accustomed disappointment—and he said, “How am I to meet the white woman? How do I find the white wife?”

The question was not entirely rhetorical. I had entered the bar with a Dutch woman, and then lost track of her—she had gone to bed—but she had made an impression: I believed that the pygmy wanted me to fix him up. “I have an idea,” he said. “The Netherlands. The bishop, my teacher, had travelled through all the world. To me, the Netherlands is just imagination. But it is real to me.”

THIS is what fascinates me most in existence: the peculiar necessity of imagining what is in fact real. In 1994, a year before I met the pygmy, the government of Rwanda had adopted a new policy, according to which everyone in the country’s Hutu majority was called upon to murder everyone in the Tutsi minority, and at least eight hundred thousand Tutsis and Hutu oppositionists were killed within three months. All at once, as it seemed, something we could have only imagined was upon us—and we could still only imagine it. As I followed the news from Rwanda, I was repeatedly reminded of the moment, near the end of Conrad’s “Heart of Darkness,” when the narrator, Marlow, is back in Europe, and his aunt, finding him depleted, fusses over his health. Marlow says, “It was not my strength that wanted nursing, it was my imagination that wanted soothing.”

I took Marlow’s condition on returning from Africa as my point of departure, and I began visiting Rwanda in May of 1995. I hadn’t been there long before I met the pygmy, in Gikongoro. I wouldn’t have guessed that he was a pygmy: he was nearly five and a half feet



Odette's theme was the threat of annihilation, and the moments of reprieve in her story came, if at all, in quick beats. Photograph by Marc Asnin.

Homo sapiens. I must not marry a Negro.” The unalloyed disgust with which he spoke this last word inclined me to agree, for the future wife’s sake. “This is my problem,” he went on. “How am I to attain this goal? You have the opportunity. I have not.” He looked around the dark, nearly empty room and held out an

tall. By declaring himself, he seemed to be setting himself apart from the matter of Hutus and Tutsis, and relating to me as a fellow-outsider—an observer at large. Still, although he never said a word about the genocide, I came away with the impression that that was the true subject of our exchange. It may have been possible to talk of something else in Rwanda, but I never had a conversation of substance there in which the genocide did not figure, at least quietly, as the point of reference from which all other understandings and misunderstandings stemmed.

So the pygmy spoke of *Homo sapiens*, and I heard a subtext. Pygmies were Rwanda's first inhabitants—a forest people, who were generally regarded by Hutus and Tutsis alike as a vestigial, aboriginal lot. In the precolonial monarchy, pygmies served as court jesters, and because Rwanda's kings were Tutsis, the memory of this ancestral role meant that during the genocide pygmies were sometimes put to death as royalist tools, while on other occasions they were enlisted by Hutu militias as rapists—to add an extra dash of tribal mockery to the violation of Tutsi women.

Quite likely, the Anglican bishop who had instructed the man I met in the Guest House bar would have regarded the education of such an original savage as a special trophy challenge to the missionary dogma that we are all God's children. But perhaps the pygmy had learned his lessons too well. Clearly, in his experience, the oneness of humanity was not a fact but, as he kept saying, a theory, a principle—a proposition of the white priest. He had taken this proposition to heart as an invitation, only to discover that it had forbidding limits. In the name of universalism, he had learned to despise the people and the jungle he came from, and to love himself for disdaining that inheritance. Now he had conceived that a white wife was the missing link required to prove his theory, and the improbability of such a match was sorely testing his faith.

I sought to ease the pygmy's frustration by suggesting that even for white men surrounded by white women—even in the Netherlands—finding a sympathetic mate can prove a great challenge. "I am talking about the African," he said.

"The African is sick." He managed, for the first time, a twisted little smile. "There is a novel," he went on. "The book is 'Wuthering Heights.' You get me? This is my larger theory. It doesn't matter if you are white or yellow or green or a black African Negro. The concept is *Homo sapiens*. The Westerner



is at an advanced technological stage, and the African is at a stage of technology that is more primitive. But all humanity must unite together in the struggle against nature. This is the principle of 'Wuthering Heights.' This is the mission of *Homo sapiens*. Do you agree?" I said, "I hear you."

"Humanity's struggle to conquer nature," the pygmy said fondly. "It is the only hope. It is the only way for peace and reconciliation—all humanity one against nature."

RWANDA had not always been so divided against itself. As Odette Nyiramilimo, a physician in Kigali, told me, "I was born in Kinunu, Gisenyi, in 1956, so I was three when the history of this genocide began." She meant, of course, that before 1959, there had never been systematic, politically organized popular violence between Hutus and Tutsis. In November of that year, Hutu activists, reacting against the injustices of Belgian colonial rule—an apartheid-like system, in which the minority Tutsis were considered the superior race—launched a campaign of pillage, arson, murder, and expulsions against the Tutsi population. By 1962, when the Belgians withdrew from the country, the tone had been set for what would pass for "majority rule" in Rwanda: a regime of discrimination, exclusion, and periodic violence that reached its perverse apogee in 1994, with the effort to eliminate the minority entirely.

"I can't remember it exactly," Odette said of 1959, "but I did see a group of men on the facing hill descending with machetes, and I can still see houses burning. We ran into the bush with our cows and stayed there for two months."

Odette sat straight, perched forward on a white plastic lawn chair, with her hands folded on a bare white plastic table between us. Her husband was playing tennis; some of her children were paddling around in the pool. It was a Sunday at the Cercle Sportif in Kigali—the smell

of chicken on the grill, the sounds of splashing and the *pock* of tennis balls, the gaudy brilliance of jacaranda blooms along the garden wall. We sat in the shade of a tall tree, well apart from the next tables. Odette wore jeans and a white blouse, and had a thin gold chain with a pendant charm at her throat.

"I don't remember when we rebuilt the house," she said, "but in '63, when I was in the second year of primary school, I remember seeing my father, well-dressed, as if for a festival, in a white cloth wrap. He was out on the road, and I was with the other children, and he said, 'Good-bye, my children, I'm going to die.' We cried out, 'No! No!' He said, 'Didn't you see a jeep go by on the road? It had all your maternal uncles on board, and I won't wait for them to hunt me down. I'll wait here to die with them.' We cried and cried and convinced him not to die then, but the others were all killed."

This is how Rwandan Tutsis count the years of their lives: in a hopscotch fashion—'59, '60, '61, '63, and so on—sometimes skipping several years, when they knew no terror, sometimes slowing down to name the months and the days.

"Then it was '73," Odette said. "I had left home, for a teachers college, and one morning, while we were eating, they closed the windows and the gates. Then some boys from another school came in the dining hall and circled the tables. I was trembling. I remember I had a piece of bread in my mouth, and I couldn't swallow it. The boys shouted, 'Get up, Tutsis! All the Tutsis stand up!'" Some of the Tutsi girls were spat at, some were beaten—Odette's hair was pulled—and then all of them were expelled.

When Odette spoke of 1973, she didn't mention the background to the renewed violence: mass killings of Hutus in neighboring Burundi, and the economic and political stagnation of the Rwandan regime. These circumstances didn't figure in her memory. She stuck to her story, which was enough: one morning, while she had her mouth full of bread, her world had once again collapsed because she was Tutsi. "We were six girls, chased out of my school," she told me. "I had my sack, and we walked." After three days they had covered fifty miles, and arrived in the town of Kibuye. Odette had relatives there—"a sister of my brother-in-law who had married a Hutu"—and she figured she would stay

with them. "This man had a sharpening business," she said. "I found him in front of his house at his grinding stone. At first he ignored me. I thought, Is he drunk? Doesn't he see who is here? I said, 'It's me, Odette.' He said, 'Why are you here? It's school season.' I said, 'But we've been expelled.' Then he said, 'I don't give shelter to cockroaches.' That's what he said. My sister-in-law came along and she embraced me, and"—Odette clapped her hands together over her head, and chopped them down in front of her chest—"he separated us roughly."

Odette looked at her outstretched arms, and let them fall. Then she laughed and said, "In '82, when I first became a doctor, my first job was at the Kibuye hospital, and the first patient I had was this same man. I couldn't face him. I was trembling, and I had to leave the room. My husband was the director of the hospital, and I told him, 'I can't treat this man.' He was very sick and I had taken my oath, but..."

In Rwanda, the story of a girl who is sent away as a cockroach and comes back as a medicine woman must be, at least in part, a political story. And that was how Odette told it. In 1973, after her in-law rejected her, she kept walking—home to Kinunu, where she found her father's house empty; the family was hiding in the bush. Then, in July, Rwanda's Army chief, Major General Juvénal Habyarimana, who had been in charge of organizing the violence against Tutsis, staged a coup, declared himself President, and called a moratorium on attacks against Tutsis, in order to mark a new era of peace and development.

Odette managed to find a place in a new school for young women in the sciences. Its director agreed to keep her name out of the enrollment books, and to hide her when government inspectors came looking for Tutsis. "Those were the good years," she said. "The headmistress looked after me, I had become a good student—first in my class—and I was later admitted, with some more trickery, to the national medical school, in Butare."

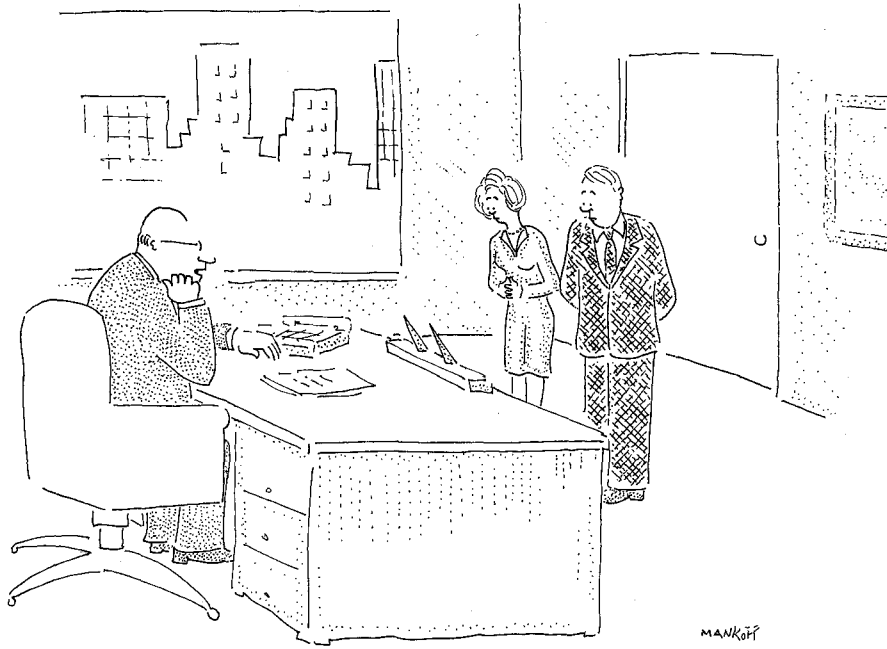
The only thing Odette said about her life as a medical student was "In Butare once, a professor of internal medicine came up to me and said, 'What a pretty girl,' and he started patting my bottom, and tried to set up a date even though he was married."

The memory just popped out of her, with no apparent connection to the thought that preceded it or the thought that followed. Then Odette sped ahead, skipping over the years to her graduation and her marriage. Yet for a moment that image of her as a young student in an awkward moment of surprise and unwanted sexual insight hung between us. It seemed to amuse Odette, and it reminded me that there was a lot she wasn't telling as she recited her life story. She was keeping the "good years," the "normal times," to herself.

LATER, I met Odette several times at parties; she and her husband were gregarious and understandably popular. Together, they ran a clinic called the Good Samaritan. They had a charmingly affectionate ease with each other, and one saw right away that they were in the midst of full and engaging lives. But when we met in the garden of the Cercle Sportif, Odette spoke as a genocide survivor to a foreign correspondent. Her theme was the threat of annihilation, and the moments of reprieve in her story—fond memories, funny anecdotes, sparks of wit—came, if at all, in quick beats, like punctuation marks.

This made sense to me. We are, each of us, functions of how we imagine ourselves and of how others imagine us, and, looking back, we come upon discrete tracks of memory: the times when our lives were most sharply defined in relation to others' ideas of us, and the more private times when we were freer to imagine ourselves. My own parents and grandparents came to the United States, fleeing Nazism. They were refugees, not genocide survivors, but they came with stories similar to Odette's, of having been hunted from here to there because they were born as a this and not a that, or because they had chosen to resist the hunters in the service of an opposing political idea. Near the end of their lives, both my paternal grandmother and my maternal grandfather wrote their memoirs, and, although their stories and their sensibilities were notably different, both ended their accounts of their lives right in the middle of those lives—with a full stop at the moment they arrived in America. I don't know why they stopped there. Perhaps nothing that came afterward ever made them so terribly aware and alive. But while I was listening to Odette it occurred to me that if others have so often made your life into their





"Well, well, well! If it isn't hanky and panky!"

business—made your life into a question, really, and made that question their business—then you may be eager to guard the privacy of those times which were truly your own to imagine.

So remembering has its economy, and when Odette mentioned the hand of the professor of internal medicine patting her bottom, and grinned, I saw that she had forgotten that economy and wandered in her memories, and I felt that we were both glad of it. A professor had imagined her to be susceptible and she had imagined that he, as a married man and her teacher, should know greater restraint. They had each other wrong. But people have the strangest notions as they navigate each other in this life—and in the good years, the normal times, that isn't the end of the world.

BY the mid-eighties, Odette and her husband, Jean-Baptiste Gasasira, had settled in Kigali with their three children. They had well-paid jobs at the Central Hospital. "Our best friends were Hutus, ministers and those who were in power from our generation. This was our crowd. But it was a bit hard," Odette recalled, adding, "We were known as Tutsis."

The sense of exclusion could be subtle, but with time it became increasingly blunt. In November of 1989, a man came to the maternity ward asking for

Dr. Odette. "He was very impatient and insisted we had to talk. He said, 'You're needed at the Presidency, at the office of the Secretary General of Security.'" Odette was terrified; she assumed that she would be interrogated about her habit, during trips abroad, of visiting family members and Rwandan friends living in exile. Contact with refugees was outlawed, and Odette knew how thorough President Habyarimana's spy network could be. She had no idea what to say if her visits to exiles had been discovered.

"Dr. Odette," Habyarimana's security chief said, "they say you're a very good doctor."

Odette said, "I don't know."

"Yes," he went on. "You're said to be intelligent. You studied at these schools without the right. But what did you say in the hospital corridor recently, after the death of President Habyarimana's brother?"

Odette didn't know what he was talking about.

The security chief told her: "You said that demons should take the whole Habyarimana family."

Odette, who had been trembling with fear, laughed. "I'm a doctor," she said. "You think I believe in demons?"

The security chief laughed, too. Odette went home, and the next morning, as usual, she went to work. "I started

my rounds," she recalled. "Then a colleague came up to me and said, 'You're always going away. Where are you going to go now, to Belgium or where?' And he took me to see—my name had been struck from the doors to the wards, and everyone was told I didn't work there anymore."

IN the fall of 1980, the naturalist Dian Fossey, who had spent the past thirteen years in the mountains of northwestern Rwanda studying the habits of mountain gorillas, withdrew to Cornell University to finish a book. Her deal with Cornell required her to teach a course, and I was one of her students. One day, before class, I found her in one of her famously dark moods. She had just caught her cleaning woman removing the hair from her—Fossey's—comb. I was impressed: a cleaning woman, much less such a diligent one, struck my undergraduate imagination as highly exotic. But Fossey had had a row with the woman, and may have even given her the sack. She told me that her hair—and, for that matter, her fingernail clippings—were for her to dispose of. Burning was best, but a flush toilet was O.K., too. So the cleaning woman was a scapegoat; Fossey was mad at herself. Leaving her hair lying about like that was bad form: anybody could get hold of it and work a spell on her. I said, "You really believe that?" Fossey shot back, "Where I live, if I didn't, I'd be dead."

Five years passed, and I saw in the newspaper that Dian Fossey had been murdered in Rwanda, and much later, when Odette told me of her talk with Habyarimana's security chief about the question of demons, I was reminded of my exchange with Fossey. Power is terribly complex; if powerful people believe in demons it may be best to take heed. In 1990, when violence against Tutsis and political oppositionists resumed in Rwanda, Habyarimana and his entourage behaved as if anybody they imagined to be an enemy was one, simply because of their suspicion. So when men were sent to the hospital to arrest Odette they got the wrong person. "I had been given my job back," she told me, "and I had a colleague who was Hutu and she denied that she was me, but she was much taller than I am and they said, 'There's only one Tutsi

doctor named Odette.' So she was imprisoned and tortured, and in 1994 she was again mistaken for a Tutsi and killed."

ON the evening of April 6, 1994, Odette and Jean-Baptiste were having a whiskey with a visitor when a friend called to tell them to listen to the radio. They did so, and heard that President Habyarimana had been killed. Jean-Baptiste's immediate reaction to the news was "We're leaving. Everyone get in the jeep, or we'll all be massacred," and their visitor said, "O.K., me, too. I'm getting out of here. Keep your whiskey." Odette smiled when she told me this. She said, "This man liked his whiskey. He was handicapped, and he'd come over to show off his new television and video player, because my husband is very generous and he had given this guy money to buy it. He used to say, 'You know I'm going to die if I don't have a TV to watch.' Unfortunately, he never got to watch his TV. He was killed."

Odette wiped at her eyes, and said, "That's a story I've always kept inside—about this handicapped guy—because he was so happy with his TV." She smiled again. "So," she said. "So. So. So." It was the only time she wept in telling her story. She covered her face with one hand, and the fingers of the other tapped rapidly on the table. Then she said, "I'm going to get us some sodas." She came back five minutes later. "Better now," she said. "I'm sorry. It was this handicapped guy—Dusabe was his name—that upset me. It's difficult to call this up, but I think of it every day. Every day."

I rarely saw such tears in Rwanda, although over time I listened to at least a hundred survivors describing in intimate detail the horrors they had endured. And it impressed me that Odette's tears flowed for a man who had not been as close to her as dozens of others—people whose brutal ordeals or deaths she spoke of with dry eyes. She and Jean-Baptiste and their children had not succeeded in fleeing Kigali, but they had managed to survive, and the price of survival had been great.

Odette told me about how her children were captured briefly by the genocidal militias, about listening with shut eyes as her sister was shot dead a few feet from her, about being pursued by killers through a marsh of dense papyrus plants,

which grew higher than her head, and about being forced off a truck that was supposed to be carrying her to safety at a roadblock teeming with murderers eager for new prey. One of her sons kept as a souvenir a bullet that had whizzed past her daughter's head and lodged in the doorway of their house.

Immediately after the genocide, Odette had taken her children to Nairobi, vowing never to return to Rwanda. Then she received news that some of her nephews and nieces had survived. "As soon as I heard that, I knew I had to come back," she said. She and Jean-Baptiste have adopted eleven children, and take it upon themselves to treat child survivors for free at their clinic.

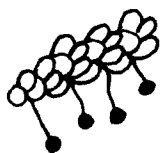
Odette looked over at her own children in the pool of the Cercle Sportif. When she turned back to me, she said, "This life after a genocide is really a ghastly life." She said, "I was talking to my youngest, Patrick. I said, 'What are you thinking about?' He said, 'Those two guys who came with machetes. It comes back all the time.' The children don't go out. You have to push them—they like to stay home. They think about it a lot. My little Patrick—he goes alone into a room, and he looks under the bed for militia. My daughter Arriane was in a very good boarding school in Nairobi, and one night she sat up, reliving everything, and she cried. At midnight the dorm monitor came by and they spent nearly the whole night together. Arriane told her what had happened, and the monitor was amazed. She'd had no idea. Nobody really knows. Nobody wants to know."

Odette nodded at my notebook, where I was writing as she spoke. "Do the people in America really want to read this? People tell me to write these things down, but it's written inside of me. I almost hope for the day when I can forget."

THE pygmy in Gikongoro also seemed to yearn for some relief from memory. When he said that humanity must unite in the struggle against nature to get along and have peace, he sat back in his chair, with his arms crossed over his chest, and went silent.

After a while, I said, "But humanity is part of nature, too."

"Exactly," the pygmy said. "That is exactly the problem." ♦



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THE POLITICAL SCENE

PRIMARY CAD

The President felt defiant, his inner circle felt betrayed, and the public felt nothing. A longtime Clinton observer examines the destructive schism dividing a nation's political classes from its people.

BY JOE KLEIN

YOU just know he's pulling an all-nighter," Mandy Grunwald said on the evening before Bill Clinton admitted to the Starr grand jury that his earlier denials of sexual contact with a young intern were, to use his term of art, "legally accurate" but incomplete. Grunwald, a former Clinton media adviser, laughed, wistfully.

To the President's circle of friends and former employees, his habits, excesses, and eccentricities are both legendary and entirely predictable. The Monica Lewinsky affair was shocking and disgraceful but not unpredictable. The reactions of the press and the Republicans and the public to the affair also went pretty much as expected. That the President would somehow survive this squalid moment seemed likely, too. He always does. But there will be a difference this time. If he squirms his way past the posse, there won't be any joy, or much relief, among his supporters. There will be none of the exhilaration they experienced when he survived the Gennifer Flowers revelations and the draft-dodging crisis during the New Hampshire primary in 1992, or the satisfaction when he outwitted Newt Gingrich's Republican "revolution" in 1995; none of the breathless glee—the stories traded, the "Did we really escape that?" giggles—as he maneuvered out of yet another impossible situation and skittered to something approaching safety. The Lewinsky affair has put an end to all that. Everyone, including those closest to him, has had a bellyful of Bill Clinton now.

In the beginning, it had seemed remarkable—and charming, in an accessible, collegiate sort of way—that a man who stood a reasonable chance of becoming President of the United States would pull all-nighters whenever he was tested, and often when he was not. Most campaign metaphors are martial, and

someone nicknamed the strategic nexus of the Clinton operation the War Room. But the reality was more generationally appropriate: the War Room was actually a dorm room—a floating bull session, sticky with spilled Diet Coke, reeking of musty pepperoni with extra cheese. There was a precocious fizz to it, which extended to the candidate himself. Often, the all-nighters were about policy or philosophy: Clinton loved to talk about serious things. "I've never seen anything like it," David Osborne, one of the authors of "Reinventing Government," told me after making a tour of the more creative governorships in the nineteen-eighties. "He seems to be up on every social program in America."

The omnivorous enthusiasm about serious things attracted a great many people to Clinton—even a few reporters, including me. Both Clintons were lush with fresh ideas. They seemed prepared to challenge some of the basic assumptions of traditional liberal social policy—not merely for political advantage, as critics would later claim, but because the old ways had turned out to be impersonal and ineffective, and were ready to be improved upon. The Governor of Arkansas could go on for hours when discussing welfare or education, or water and sewer programs—or movies or golf. "I keep thinking of the conversations we had, the sense of possibility," an old friend of the Clintons told me sadly last week. "It's completely gone now—thrown away. I can't tell you how painful that is."

But even in the beginning there was a strangeness to Clinton's endless chatter. There was an odd, distended, needy quality to it: it was the conversational equivalent of someone standing too close to you (although there was never any real intimacy to it). That was especially so late at night: He would go on and on. He would pick up speed and intensity as the hours

stretched, like an eighteen-wheeler careering along on the interstate after midnight. Nothing much was ever accomplished in a Clinton all-nighter. The sessions tended to be retrospective, not prospective. Clinton would chew over the events of the day and revisit decisions he'd already made, rather than plan his next steps.

That began to change when he was elected President, but not quickly enough. In 1993, Clinton's rambling policy seminars on Bosnia—they were daytime equivalents of all-nighters—startled crisp, military sorts like Colin Powell. Even on minor questions, like ambassadorships, the President could whirl, wriggle, change his mind a dozen times, and then postpone them further. But gradually he did become more disciplined; by the beginning of his second term, the all-nighter era was long past. The new style was set by Clinton's ultra-brisk, ultra-corporate chief of staff, Erskine Bowles, who had actually made a first-term study of the President's propensity for wasting time. "I don't think there's anyone left around here he likes enough to stay up with all night," one Clinton veteran has said.

Still, moments of personal crisis—especially those related to Clinton's seething anger over the continuing Starr inquisition—could send him hurrying back to the dorm. Visitors to the White House say that when the subject turned to Starr the President couldn't stop talking. "That man is evil," he would tell friends. "When this thing is over, there's going to be only one of us left standing. And it's going to be me."

The public, which has come to know far too much about this President, never got to see that angry, adolescent side of Bill Clinton. The public never saw the temper tantrums, the almost hilarious self-involvement, the solipsistic sense of entitlement which led him to indulge his appetites with a White House intern. It

STEVE BRODNER



The most startling thing about the latest Monica Lewinsky spectacle was that the President was suddenly all alone.

never saw the childishness. "I'm so angry at you," the President once told a political ally, "I'm not going to talk to you today."

The public never saw all this because Bill Clinton was protected by the most sophisticated communications apparatus in the history of American politics. The amount of money and energy spent on polling, on market-testing every new idea, every turn of phrase, was phenomenal. By the 1996 reelection campaign, the freewheeling young policy wonk who'd been Governor of Arkansas had been transformed into a cautious, middle-aged marketing executive. And another transformation had taken place: the dorm room actually had become a War Room. If the Republicans had broken new ground in the art of political attack in the nineteen-eighties, Clinton had perfected the instant counterattack in the nineties. From the beginning of his White House tenure, it was partisan Armageddon. The President assembled a phalanx of zealous defenders ready to slash the opposition. James Carville, the fiercest and most highly skilled of the President's hammers, actually wrote a book entitled "We're Right, They're Wrong." No quarter was given. The decibel level was ludicrous, and most normal people—understanding that there was really very little at stake in a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity—tuned out.

To be fair, the President wasn't as enthusiastic a combatant as the new generation of Republican conservatives, led by Newt Gingrich. Not at the start, at least. But, as the Clintons' policy goals were foiled—especially after the First Lady's attempt to pass a universal health-insurance plan encountered a bitter and humiliating defeat, in 1994—and the personal campaign against them escalated, both Clintons came to see the opposition as deranged and unscrupulous. All too often, they were right: they were afflicted by a steady barrage from bottom-feeding tabloid profiteers, by an almost laughably unsavory catalogue of right-wing ideologues, and by an impossibly pompous press. The endless, metastasizing Starr investigation, which has yet to disclose a serious infraction relating to Bill Clinton's criminal misuse of office as President or as Governor, was a constant, infuriating presence in their lives. It seems likely that the passion of Clinton's Lewinsky denials was intensified by his outrage that his enemies had finally found a pretext to penetrate his personal life.

In a way, the most startling aspect of the Lewinsky spectacle was seeing the President suddenly all alone, his communications apparatus useless—spinless for once. Given the delicate legal considerations, this was probably unavoidable, since the political team was kept in the dark by the President's

lawyers. Uninformed, his inner circle seemed momentarily in danger of coming unglued. It took several days after the President's testimony and speech—and the intervention of the United States military in Afghanistan and Sudan—for the White House staff to quietly gather itself together again.

Even now, the operation has a fragility, an uncertainty that resembles the depressed, diffident shakiness following the Republican congressional victory of 1994, when the President seemed to withdraw from public view for a time, and his staff began to sense a shadowy new strategic presence, which turned out to be Dick Morris, his old political consultant—who subsequently disappeared after being caught with a prostitute. But this situation is far more serious than that was—because at the heart of it is a disgust with and a distrust of the President himself.

IN Washington, news is a parlor game. Newspaper stories, especially those in the elite press, come encrypted with secret messages. Sometimes the messages are very personal. The lead article in the *New York Times* on Friday, August 14th, three days before Clinton testified, was just such a story. The headline was stunning: "PRESIDENT WEIGHS ADMITTING HE HAD SEXUAL CONTACTS." The source of the story, it was widely assumed by other Clinton advisers, was the President's old friend and legal adviser Mickey Kantor. Kantor's law firm strenuously denies it. The media's first impression was that this was business as usual, the beginning of a new spin cycle—that it was a controlled leak, with the White House taking charge of the Lewinsky story and preparing the public, so that the President's revised testimony wouldn't come as a complete shock. But there was much more to it than that. Someone close to the President was "sending a message," a longtime friend of the First Family said, and the message was: Stop dawdling, Mr. President. Face the facts, and tell your wife and your staff that you are about to change your story. The *Times* account shocked a great many people in the White House. Clinton's press secretary, Mike McCurry, says he had no idea that it was coming. Rahm Emanuel, the adviser whose office is next to the Oval Office, says he didn't know about it, either. Apparently, the story also surprised the First Lady.



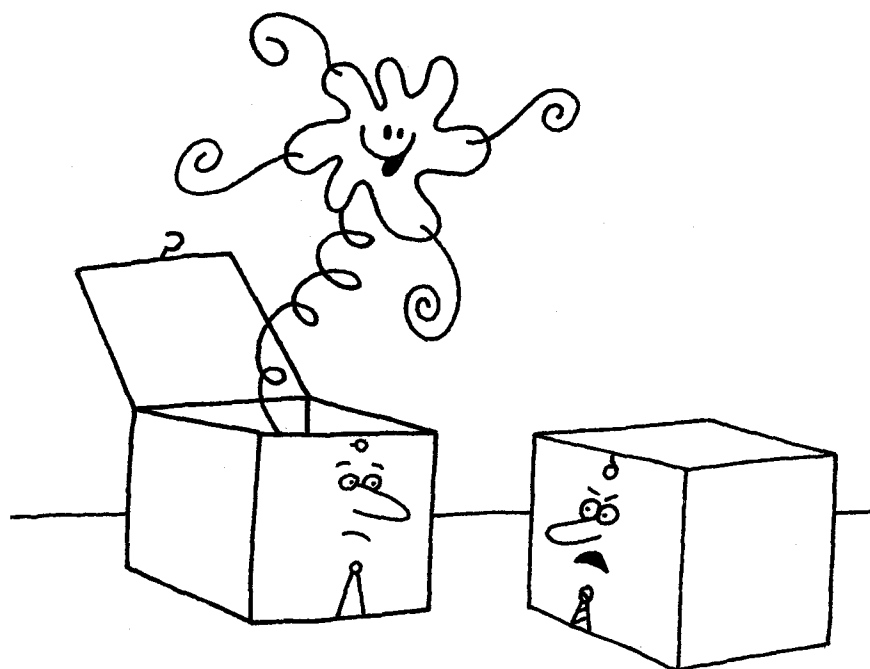
"Use the back door from now on, kids. That's where I've installed our new metal detector."

That Hillary Clinton reacted with some heat to the *Times* story has now become a matter of controversy. She had to have known about the affair, it is surmised. How could she not have? One possible explanation comes from David Maraniss, Clinton's biographer: he has said that the President and the First Lady have a "Don't ask, don't tell" arrangement concerning such matters. That seems implausible for a couple whose private life has been subject to such intense prying, but it is not impossible. According to one close friend of the family, the First Lady did ask her husband point blank one morning last winter, "So who is Monica Lewinsky?" Apparently, the President's response was legally accurate but incomplete.

Of course, by August 14th Mrs. Clinton did know the same things the rest of the world knew: by then, Monica Lewinsky had decided to cooperate with the prosecution; by then, the rumors of a stained dress—a piece of evidence that originally seemed too tawdry to be real—had been confirmed, and the existence of all the gifts and phone calls established. But it is entirely possible that the President had not yet sat his wife down and explained himself. If so, the First Lady surely must have been devastated by the silence—for reasons both personal and political. The President had been as adamant in his private denials of the affair as he'd been in public, and often more convincing. He'd work his signature magic, stare his interlocutors in the eye, drape an arm over their shoulders, and then, deeply, mournfully, he'd say, "If you only knew the truth."

Besides, the Clintons' famously "imperfect" marriage had appeared to solidify during the White House years. "She thought his messing around was over," a friend says. "She assumed that living in the White House was like being in jail." Or, perhaps, a monastery. But friends also say that a good deal of the First Lady's anger was political: the President had handed their mortal enemy Kenneth Starr the power to destroy all that they'd worked for. And there was probably some anger, too, that the President had worked out the strategy for handling this most important crisis—and was about to change his testimony—without her.

In the days that followed, there was speculation in the press that the family



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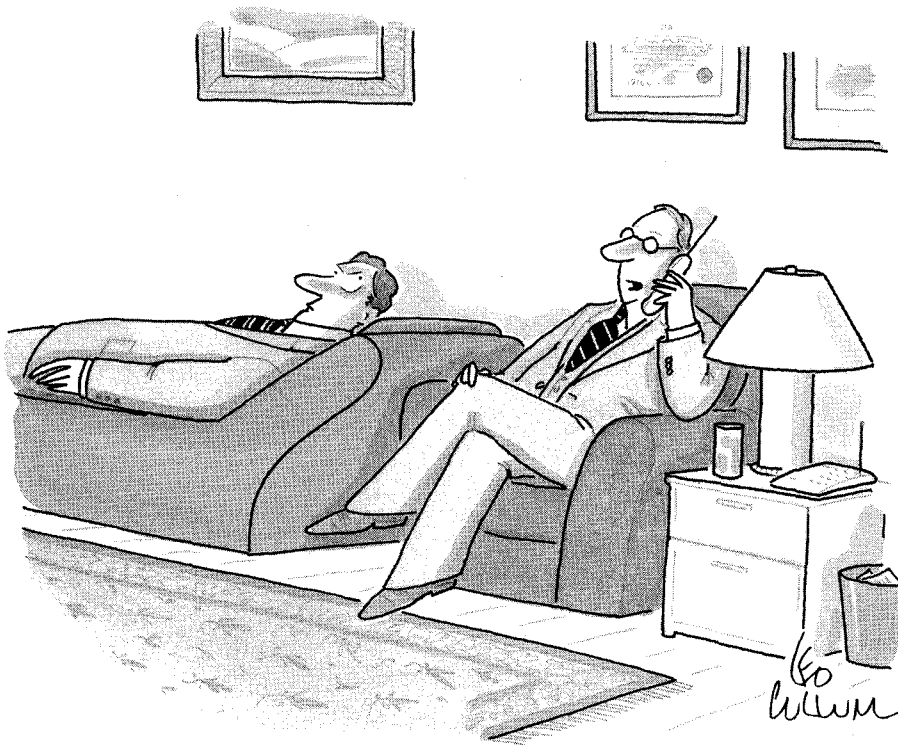
"Take my advice, Haskins, and keep your out-of-the-box ideas to yourself."

trauma—the cool body language, the summoning of the Reverend Jesse Jackson to the family quarters, the sheer embarrassment—was something of a ruse, an effort to make the First Lady seem less culpable after she had defended her husband so vehemently (and spun out conspiracy theories so ardently) on the "Today" show in January. But there is a fairly strong consensus among staff and friends—none of whom, obviously, would ever speak on the record about this—that the First Lady had been kept in the dark on the sordid details of the Lewinsky affair and also on the decision to change the legal strategy, and that the *Times* story really had been a surprise. "Something strange happened that Friday," a former White House adviser said. "It's possible that the President himself was surprised by the story. It's possible he still couldn't bring himself to do what he had to do. My sense is that the Bob Woodward story in the Sunday Washington Post was an effort to continue nudging the President into place."

In that story, which appeared on August 16th, Woodward wrote that "a person who has spoken to the President and his legal team" had said on Friday that Clinton had "not prepared the family" and "he has got a lot of work to do with the family."

As it happened, the President had not prepared his political staff any better—or with any more consideration—than he had his wife. Nor had he prepared himself sufficiently—certainly not emotionally, and perhaps not legally—for the sorts of questions he'd be facing from the prosecutors on Monday. Afterward, aides said he'd been busy with other things. "He was spending a lot of time on Afghanistan," one told me. But he'd also gone into late-night mode: avoidance, delay, and denial. In any case, Bill Clinton never adequately faced the inevitable consequences, both public and private, of his changing his Lewinsky story.

THE speech was dreadful. The President himself acknowledged that to close associates within a matter of days. It was, without question, Bill Clinton's least effective public moment in the White House—the most embarrassing four minutes in the history of the American Presidency since Richard Nixon's maudlin resignation speech. Afterward, a few of the President's more persistent (and partisan) assistants said that there had been no way for Clinton to win, really—that nothing he could have done would have brought the Lewinsky business to a conclusion that night. The Starr investigation would



"I'm going to be late, dear. It's total craziness here."

push ahead, no matter what. But most of the President's friends believed that a more effective apology might have isolated Starr, left the prosecutor with only the most ideological Republican supporters, and rendered his eventual—and, no doubt, messy—findings politically peripheral, with insufficient support for an impeachment process.

Indeed, for a moment, as the media were being briefed just before the speech, it seemed the President might neutralize the opposition with a more forthcoming tone and rhetoric. Just after 9 P.M., Tim Russert, NBC's Washington bureau chief, whose pursuit of this story had sometimes gone beyond relentless, seemed ready for an armistice, based on the promise of fulsome Presidential contrition. He said that the purpose of the speech would be "candor, contrition, and, they hope, closure." He said that the President was going to apologize to the nation, that he would be the "good cop" and not attack the independent counsel—the dirty work would be left to his staff. "The President will take a big step," Russert said, "but it is not the end of this."

Russert had been misled by his White House sources. Aides—particularly the speechwriter Paul Begala and the senior adviser Rahm Emanuel, who

had written a more contrite and less combative draft, which was later shown to several reporters—had obviously been engaged in wishful thinking. They had briefed the press for the speech they *hoped* Clinton would deliver. Afterward, Begala wasn't talking, nor were others in the White House eager to relive the moment, but it was clear that the White House press operation's usual "message discipline" had unravelled. "This was not the speech his aides hoped he would make," Sam Donaldson said on ABC right after Clinton went off the air.

Another important adviser who may have chosen the moment to pursue a personal agenda was the First Lady. The most popular theory was that this was precisely the avenging speech that Hillary Clinton had wanted her husband to deliver. The second most popular theory was that this was the speech that the President *thought* his wife—who had publicly introduced the notion that the Starr investigation was part of a "right-wing conspiracy"—wanted him to deliver. But it's possible that neither theory was correct. "She wasn't as involved in the strategy sessions as people think," said one person close to the family, who believes that when the First Lady famously said, "It's your speech, say what you want," she

may actually have been saying, "I don't want any part of this." Under normal circumstances, her role would have been to calm her husband, saying, "You're too angry—stop yourself," when he came out, "seething," according to the friend, from the grand-jury testimony. But she rather pointedly chose not to do that.

And so—for once—the President stood before the country without the benefit of market-testing, and without staff or spouse to tamp down his wilder impulses. It wasn't pretty. But the results would probably have been just as grisly if the President had had the benefit of his usual spin team. He might have been calmer, more contrite, but he probably still would have stuck with his untenable legalism: that his previous denial of a sexual relationship with Lewinsky, delivered under oath in the Paula Jones sexual-harassment case, had been "legally accurate." In other words, Bill Clinton had decided to acknowledge the most hilariously absurd and mingy rumor that had been floated during the seven months of Lewinsky: that he believed oral sex was not sex.

The only possible response of a loyal Clintonite to such a remarkable proposition was silence, and pained silence was about the most favorable reaction that the President received as the reality of his statement was absorbed during the next forty-eight hours. Privately, the White House staff was aghast. There were several categories of response: more than a few staff members—especially those who had defended the President publicly during the past seven months—expressed the same sense of betrayal that the former staff members George Stephanopoulos and Dee Dee Myers had expressed on television and in columns for the newsweeklies. There was some disingenuousness in that: within the Clinton inner circle, the long-standing assumption about Monica Lewinsky had been the same as the general assumptions about Paula Jones and Gennifer Flowers—that the President had undoubtedly glanced their way but the facts probably didn't bear an exact resemblance to the stories the women were telling.

The Paula Jones incident should have been particularly instructive. For one thing, there was a witness: Danny Ferguson, a state trooper who ultimately remained loyal to Clinton, testified that he'd invited Jones to Governor Clinton's

Little Rock hotel room at the Governor's behest on May 8, 1991. The date itself was significant: it was two days after Clinton had, in effect, launched his Presidential campaign, with a rousing speech before the national media, at a Democratic Leadership Council convention in Cleveland. Ferguson's testimony—he contended that Jones left the Governor's hotel room after about twenty minutes, with a smile on her face—indicated that Clinton was not prepared to abide by the post-Gary Hart rules of the road. By early 1994, when the Paula Jones accusations surfaced, the more realistic Clinton staff members understood that serious sexual embarrassments could not be ruled out in the future.

But, for all the forewarning, for all the private assumptions, the reality of the Lewinsky affair was astonishing in its selfishness, crudeness, and banality. It had happened in the White House. With an intern. It involved acts—the President has now as much as admitted—more exploitative than romantic. Dee Dee Myers was not merely upset that the President hadn't told the truth. "I never believed," she wrote in *Time*, "that Bill Clinton would actually risk his presidency—a job he had studied, dreamed about and prepared for since he was a kid—for something so frivolous, so reckless, so small."

That was an expurgated version of what some of Clinton's oldest friends were saying privately. "I'm mad as hell," a former high-ranking Administration official said. "Here you had the most tactical, risk-averse President we've ever had—all that polling and market-testing before he'd even propose the tiniest of Dick Morris's 'bite-sized' social programs. And at the same time, for reasons that are inexplicable to me, he takes these huge, absurd personal risks and throws it all away. You know, you hear the same comment over and over from working people: 'He's an asshole.' Well, I'm with them."

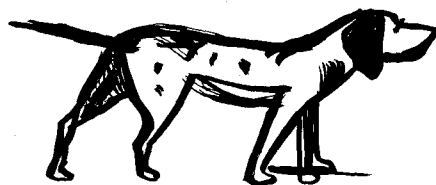
Indeed, Starr called Dick Morris—the omnipolar consultant who had rescued the Clinton Presidency after the 1994 electoral disaster—to testify before the grand jury on the day after Clinton's appearance. It was brilliant choreography. After testifying, Morris announced to the press that Clinton had consulted him in January, after the Lewinsky story broke, and had asked

him to poll the possibility of an apology. Morris claimed to have found that the public would tolerate a confession of adultery but nothing more. If Morris was telling the truth—and he has had occasional credibility problems in the past—it seemed to sum up everything that had gone wrong about the Clinton Presidency. If he'd let Morris's polling determine the most Presidential place to go on vacation (Wyoming, in 1995), why not canvass the best way to avoid responsibility for an affair?

THE Morris reappearance on Tuesday, combined with word that a miffed Monica Lewinsky would return to the grand jury on Thursday to contradict the President's account of their relationship—to say that it had been more mutual than he had admitted, and that his claim of "legal" accuracy wasn't true, either—represented the lowest moment for the White House staff. By Wednesday, it was clear that congressional Democrats weren't reacting well to the speech—that even California's liberal Senator Barbara Boxer, who is related to the Clintons by marriage (her daughter married the First Lady's brother), had taken a swipe at the President. "I think he should have told us the truth seven months ago and we could have put this behind us," Boxer said. "That relationship was wrong—clear, black and white, no room for ambiguity wrong."

Boxer was involved in a close reelection campaign against a Republican challenger, State Treasurer Matt Fong, who had been considered less than formidable—but, according to the latest polls, the race was a dead heat, and there was fear that Democrats, disgusted by the President's behavior, would simply stay home in November. It was beginning to seem possible that this year's congressional elections would be similar to the 1994 debacle, when the turnout had been generally low, except among religious conservatives and assorted Clinton-haters, who tilted a number of close races toward the Republicans.

A week after the President's speech,



House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt held out the possibility that Democrats might not remain loyal to the President if impeachment loomed. Clinton's actions had been "reprehensible," he said, although he later tiptoed away from that, saying he hoped "we can put this behind us."

The White House appeared unprepared for the terrible news coming from all directions. At times, it seemed unable to calibrate even the effects of its own spin. "Take the tie story in the *Times*," one aide said. On Wednesday, the *Times* had reported that on the day Lewinsky first testified to the grand jury the President had worn a gold-and-navy patterned Ermenegildo Zegna tie that might have been given to him by the former intern, who allegedly requested that he wear it in public when he was feeling particularly close to her. "One of our guys leaked that," the aide said, "to show how ridiculous some of Starr's questions were. The President laughed when he was asked about it during his deposition. But everyone seems to have taken the story seriously. That's how out of control this is."

By Wednesday, various staff members—and the President himself—were beginning to wonder if there was some way Clinton might take another run at an apology: in an interview, perhaps, or in response to a question at a press conference. "He can still finish the conversation," one aide said.

"I stayed up most of the night thinking about it," another staff member said. "But I think you only get one crack at this, and he had to do more than he did."

Indeed, there was a gathering dread that the President might actually try to amplify his contrition. "This is coming from the boys," a former aide said. "They're frustrated, because they were cut off from the action the first time around. They have all these skills they can't put to use. But this is a bad idea. The best thing now is to just leave him alone."

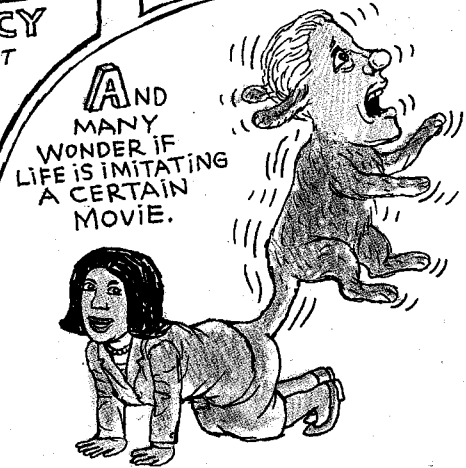
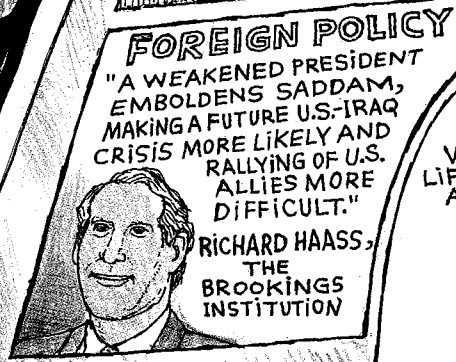
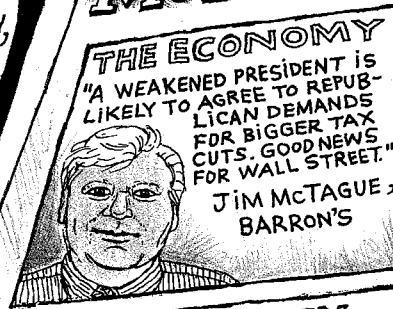
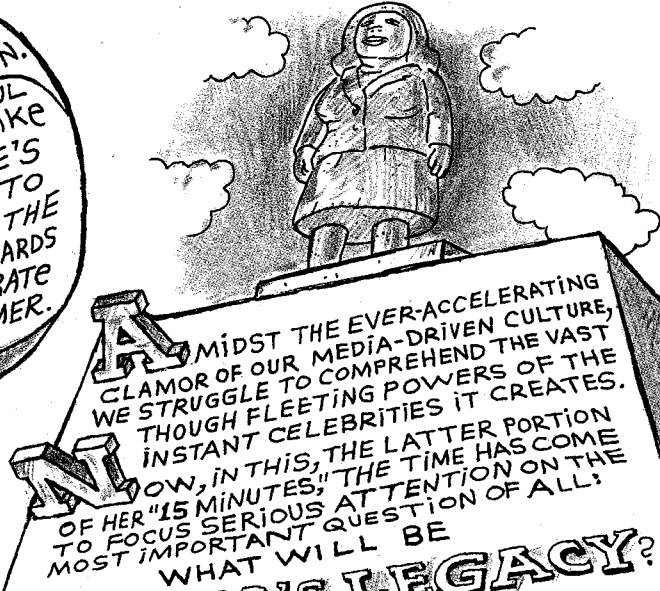
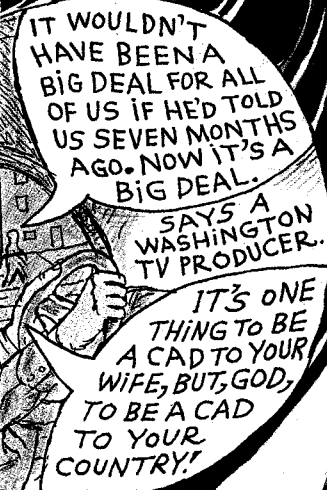
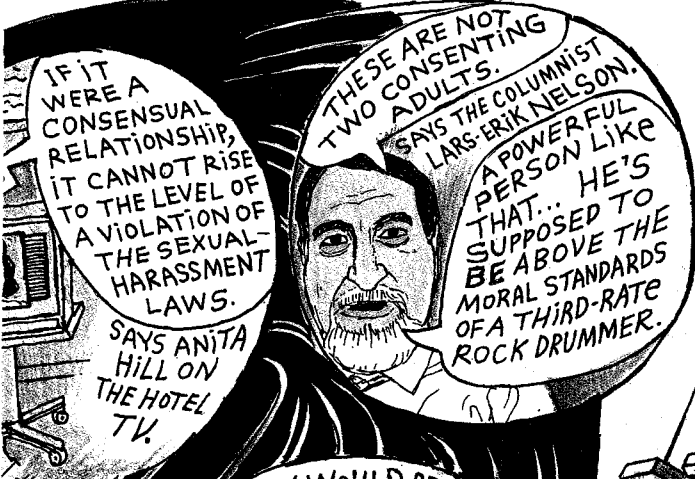
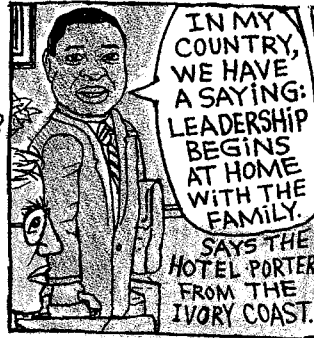
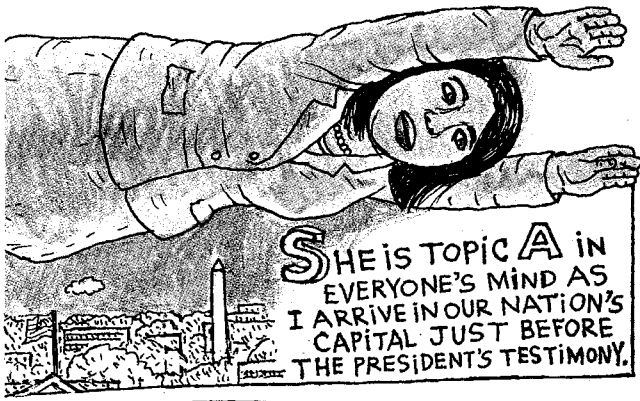
ACTUALLY, of course, the President was working another strategy—one that would dramatically change the trajectory of the story. For nearly two weeks, the Administration had been planning an assault on the guerrilla infrastructure of Osama bin Laden, the Saudi millionaire who, according to the White House, had masterminded the

bombing, on August 7th, of the United States Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and had made assorted threats against the United States government and American civilians. Early on the morning of August 20th, Clinton approved a cruise-missile attack on a pharmaceuticals factory in Sudan and on a guerrilla camp in Afghanistan, both of which were said to have been linked to bin Laden.

Although the military effectiveness and the long-term consequences of the raids remain open questions, most foreign-policy experts—including the Republican congressional leaders, who had been briefed in advance about the action by the President's national-security adviser, Sandy Berger—agreed that the attacks were an appropriate response to a growing threat. Still, there was suspicion among even the President's own foreign-policy team that the Lewinsky business had influenced the President's decision. "This is a man who has always had a very difficult time making up his mind about taking military action," said a ranking foreign-policy expert. "This time, he was very decisive. I believe it was the right thing to do, but you can't tell me that it was unrelated to the domestic political situation."

The military action did have several immediate domestic consequences. On Thursday, Pentagon reporters began to take precious airtime from White House reporters on the evening news. Defense Secretary William Cohen (who, given the tie symbolism of the week, had chosen a strikingly sombre black silk number) and the immense, uniformed new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Hugh Shelton, supplanted the usual cast of legal experts and prosecutorial characters. Lewinsky's return to the grand-jury room to contradict the President's version of their relationship was duly noted, and so was the superficial similarity of these events to the movie "Wag the Dog," in which political consultants concoct an imaginary war in Albania to distract attention from a Presidential sex scandal involving a young "Firefly Girl." But the overwhelming impression was that the President had done the right thing. Moreover, Clinton's decisiveness gave pause to those who had been saying that his Presidency was crippled, unable to function, lacked the "moral" authority to respond in an emergency. Senator Orrin Hatch, Republican







"I'm sorry, sir. The hotcakes have been snapped up."

of Utah, who had called the President a "jerk" after the Monday-night speech, quickly "applauded" the President's actions and hoped that more would follow.

On Friday, the White House appeared to be returning to normal—which wasn't an entirely unmixed blessing. One adviser tried to convince me that the bin Laden situation had affected the President's performance on Monday night, in the Lewinsky speech. "He knew that he would be returning to the Oval Office in a few days to address the nation," this adviser said. "He felt that he had to look strong, resolute, tough—he couldn't seem weak, or overly apologetic, with military action pending." (This adviser also told me that the First Lady had ended her work stoppage, and was collaborating with the President and offering suggestions about the diplomatic response to the military actions.)

A slightly more plausible, if no less rosy, spin came from a second West Wing adviser: "There are a great many possible scenarios now, including this one: Nothing happens. The Starr inquiry isn't going away. There will be a report in September. There will be a steady stream of pornographic leaks. There will be calls for the President to resign, which

he won't do. There may be the threat of an eventual impeachment inquiry. But it won't be the only story out there. The war against the terrorists will be a continuing story. The President and the First Lady will be going to Russia and Ireland. The economic and political unsteadiness in Russia will remain a very big story. And also, in September, the entire legislative agenda will be coming before the Congress—every appropriations bill, yet another showdown over the budget. The Republicans may try to argue that the Congress has been crippled by the scandal. They may try to force their will on a weakened President. But they've already lost the battle over a major tax cut, and you can be sure the President will stand up to them if they try to cut too much from the budget. And that may be all that happens, politically. Pretty much the same as before."

WHEN Clinton did wander out into public view again, making a political stop in Worcester, Massachusetts, ten days after the Lewinsky speech, it almost did seem as if everything had returned to normal. The appearance wasn't even a very big story. Russia was in turmoil. Stock markets around the

world were plummeting. And the President was giving a typically manicured performance, touting the belated expansion of one of his signature programs—the Police Corps, which provides college scholarships for students who agree to four years of police service—before an audience of stone supporters handpicked by local Democrats. The closest anyone came to mentioning Lewinsky was when Representative Jim McGovern said, "This is not a city of fair-weather friends." The following day, Clinton himself alluded to the matter, but only briefly, telling an audience on Martha's Vineyard that he was becoming "quite an expert in this business of asking for forgiveness."

It could be argued that a preponderance of the American people agreed that the Lewinsky matter was hardly worth mentioning. The President's act of quasi-contrition the previous week had been watched by rec-

ord numbers. The lurid details had been devoured. The inevitable late-night television jokes had been retold around the water coolers. The whole world now knew what a "Wag the Dog" scenario was. And when it all had been digested, public opinion had shifted not a whit. The President's job-approval ratings remained very high, in the sixty-per-cent range. The public did favor, by a margin of fifty-five to forty per cent, an alternative punishment option—a congressional vote of censure (in effect, a legislative slap on the wrist). But overwhelming majorities, more than two-thirds, opposed impeachment. And, most remarkably, when CNN asked people how they'd vote if the 1996 election were to be held again, the results were almost the same as last time: forty-six per cent for Clinton, thirty-six per cent for Bob Dole, and eleven per cent for Ross Perot. It was as if the name "Lewinsky" had never been heard in the land.

This mystified Washington. William Bennett, the former Reagan Cabinet member and virtuous brother of the President's lawyer, made the rounds of the talk shows, promoting his new book, about "the death of outrage" in America. The editorial pages of both the New

York Times and the Washington Post lacerated the President. It was nearly impossible to find a commentator with something nice to say about Bill Clinton. Even the normally understated dean of political columnists, the Washington Post's David Broder, concluded, "Like Nixon, he has done things of importance for the country. But in every important way he diminished the stature and reduced the authority of the Presidency. He may hold on, but when he said of the investigation of his activities, 'This has gone on too long,' his words could equally well have applied to his own tenure."

HOW to explain the contrast between the intensity of outrage in Washington and the laissez-faire attitude toward the President's immorality in this most religious of Western democracies? It seemed an unprecedented disparity, and quite fascinating. It was especially entertaining to watch the commentators—who'd been predicting for months that the public would soon share their obsessions, as it had during Watergate, and demand Clinton's head—try to explain why that hadn't happened. But, then, the public reaction defied illogic. It seemed measured, levelheaded, almost Continental: sophisticated, cynical, and mildly disgusted—not just with Clinton but with the whole Washington scene. The President was assumed to be promiscuous. Starr was assumed to be political. Politicians were assumed to be liars. Sex was assumed to be private. The media were assumed to be craven and sensationalist. "If all this hogwash on television doesn't stop," said Anne Astrella, a personnel manager waiting in line to see the President in Worcester, "I'm having all the TVs removed from my house."

Meanwhile, the atmosphere in Washington was bilious with myopic righteousness. The press and this President have been battling from the beginning—more over matters of style than of substance. As Lord Bryce wrote a century ago, "When political controversy is languid, per-

sonal issues come to the front." True political controversy has virtually disappeared in the peace and prosperity of the nineteen-nineties. Inordinate attention has been paid to a very colorful and larger-than-life President's personality. There has been a near-universal desire among the reporters who have covered him to see Clinton finally pay the bill for his slippery wordplay, his egregious fudging, his self-righteous immorality.

The political contentiousness of this era, the extravagant enmity that many Republicans (and some on the far left) reserve for the President, is best explained by Stephen Skowronek, at Yale, who regards Clinton—like Richard Nixon and Woodrow Wilson—as a classic "third way" President: one who successfully implemented the opposition's agenda. Clinton balanced the budget, "reformed" welfare, promised to put a hundred thousand more police on the street, and was more of a Republican-style economic internationalist than a Democratic protectionist. These positions made him seem less than trustworthy to the liberal core of his party and flagrantly unpopular among Republicans, who were outraged that he had achieved victory on the strength of their ideas.

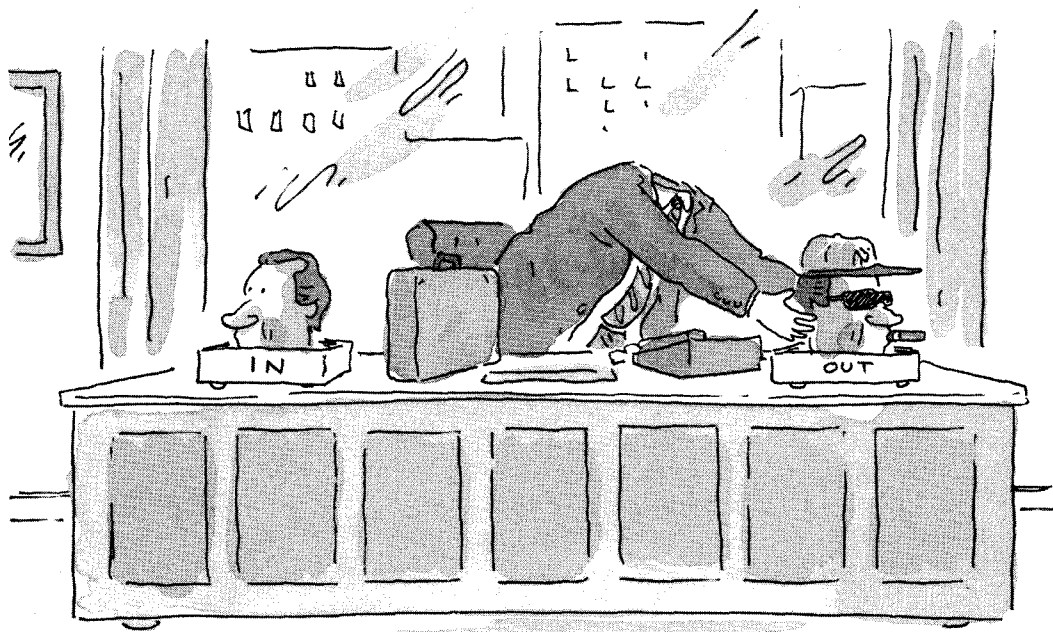
But beneath both the personal and the political enmities a more primal, and even theological, melodrama may have been under way: a temple riot, of sorts—a disturbance among the national priesthood. The Stanford litera-

ture and religion scholar René Girard, whose book "Violence and the Sacred" is about scapegoating, thinks that Clinton is a classic scapegoat, which is not to say that he is an innocent victim but that he personifies the pathologies of his time. "In Greek mythology, the scapegoat is never wrongfully accused," Girard says. "But he is always magical. He has the capacity to relieve the burden of guilt from a society. This seems a basic human impulse. There is a need to consume scapegoats. It is the way tension is relieved and change takes place."

In the current instance, it is possible to see in Bill Clinton all that his accusers loathe most about themselves: the triumph of marketing over substance, the guilt about the sexual excesses of the past quarter century, the self-hatred of a generation reared in prosperity and never tested by adversity.

"In primitive religions, a successful scapegoat sacrifice unites the people," Girard says. "Once it is accomplished, there is less violence in the community. Of course, in our world we no longer have ritual sacrifices."

We do have metaphors, though. Bill Clinton's speech was a catharsis that failed: he didn't acknowledge his guilt sufficiently, which only intensified the frustration among the élites—and added a nagging suspicion that we haven't quite suffered enough yet to do anything significant about the vague and terrible emptiness that prosperity has brought us. ♦



Shanahan

PROFILE

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

Terror is Stephen King's medium, but it's not the only reason he's so popular—and so frightening.

BY MARK SINGER

"I'M not asking you to believe in the boys in the basement," my host assured me. "But you do have to believe that *I* believe in them."

Near as I could tell, Stephen King and I were alone—seated in the lived-in living room of his lakeside home in western Maine, the relatively modest summer cottage of an immoderately prosperous cottage industrialist, an entirely pleasant setting on an unpleasantly humid July afternoon. There'd been no awkward preliminaries, and about an hour into the conversation we'd arrived at an especially interesting topic: King's funny-little-green-men theory of artistic creativity, which sounded as much like an excuse or an apology as a postulate. When it came to the hard work of writing, he seemed to be saying, the part of his brain that rendered rational decisions was otherwise engaged. (*Never*, by the way, would I have stooped to ask the great literary terrorist *where he gets his ideas*. Besides, I already knew the standard reply: "Utica, New York.") We were talking about process and intuition, not about inspiration, and he was steering the discussion. How did the job get done? The guys you really need to chew this over with, he explained—and what a shame it was they spoke only to him—were the accomplices who had custody of his imagination. Or, as Michael Noonan, the novelist protagonist of his forthcoming book, "Bag of Bones," muses, "Eighty-five percent of what goes on in a novelist's head is none of his business.... So-called higher thought is, by and large, overrated.... I find it's generally better to just stand aside and let the boys in the basement do their work."

What, then, have the boys in the basement dictated this time? "Bag of

Bones" is, à la King, not a slender volume. "I have a real problem with bloat," he once confessed. "I write like fat ladies diet." Here, for more than five hundred pages, he stirs an ample assortment of subplots, skillfully shuttling between the natural and supernatural worlds, along the way exploring the simple and profound intimacies of marriage and love and small-town life. There is, as well, the expected quota of stuff gothic, grisly, and bizarre—the stalking of the present by the past, sudden deaths, ghosts (one with a *major* attitude), evil wearing a human face, telepathy, scarifying dreamscapes—all of this animated by characters, circumstances, and dialogue that affirm King's blindfolded familiarity with everything indigenous to Maine.

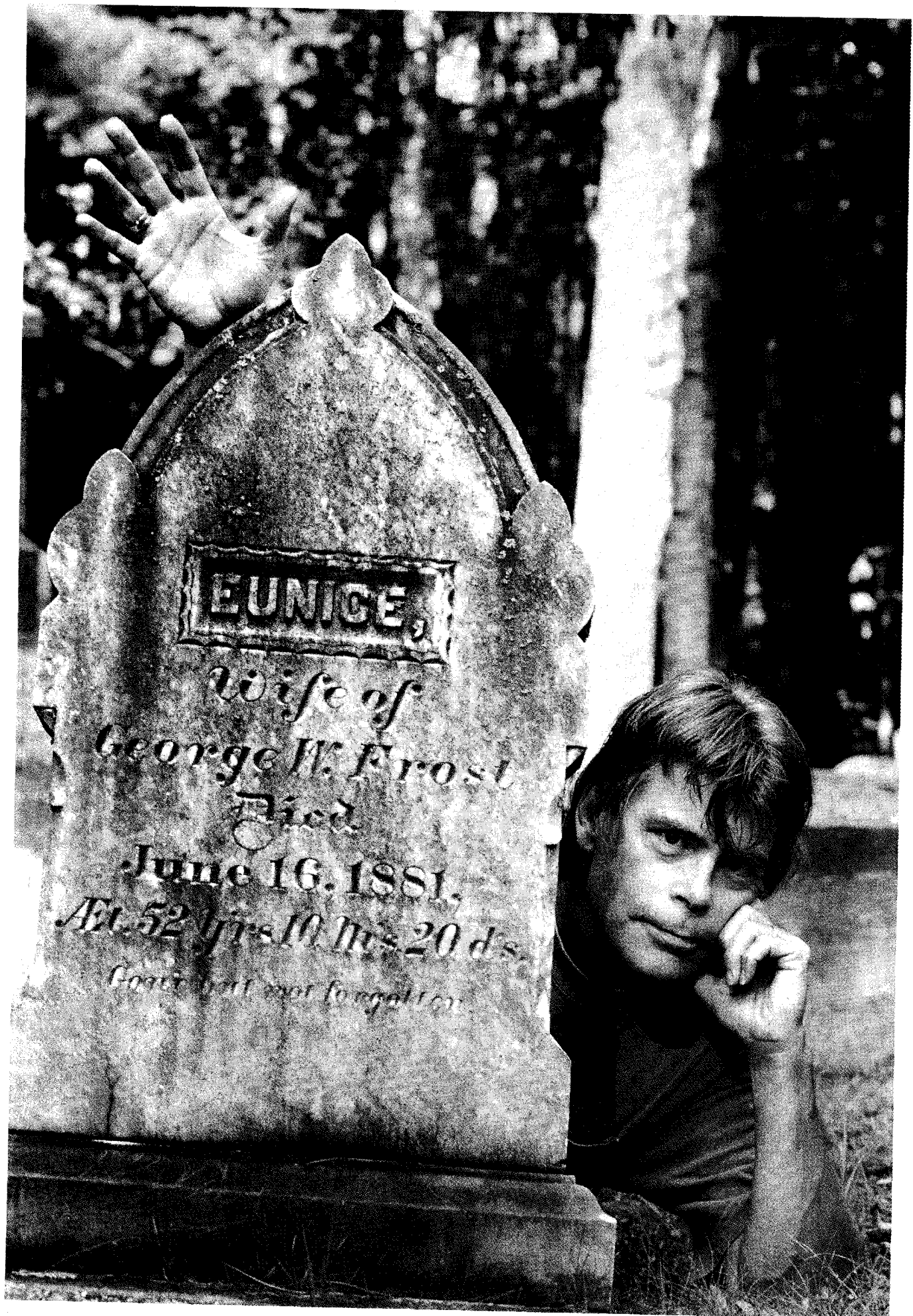
Some of the most overheated passages in "Bag of Bones" are Noonan's narrations of his crippling struggle with writer's block, lamentations one has difficulty imagining rattling the couch even in an Upper West Side shrink's office and, therefore, a measure of the improbability of that particular subplot. In King's lineage of novelist-artist-heroes—who-aren't-quite-alter-egos—following Paul Sheldon in "Misery," Gordon Lachance in "The Body," Thad Beaumont in "The Dark Half," and John Edward Marinville in "Desperation"—Noonan, a scrivener of suspense tales that occupy the middle and lower rungs of the best-seller list, is the first genuine writer to be derailed by verbal constipation. For all I know, Noonan's symptoms, triggered by the sudden death of his wife—"I can't write two paragraphs without going into total mental and physical doglock... I'm like a claustrophobe in a sinking submarine... once when I tried to force a sentence or two... I had to

grab the wastebasket and vomit"—might be cribbed from a case study in a medical journal. Or they might just be something the boys in the basement phoned in during their coffee break.

What the world knows is that King himself has never been similarly afflicted. Beginning with "Carrie," in 1974, he has published what and when he pleases—novels, novellas, short stories, occasional nonfiction; usually a book a year, sometimes two or three. According to the biographical note on the inside back cover of many of the forty or so fiction titles that have been published in mass-market paperback editions, he is "the world's best-selling novelist"—since 1974, three hundred million books sold, in thirty-three languages. (When the spirit moves him, he agrees to write the inevitable screenplay adaptation; when disinclined, he still cashes a check.) In 1996, he simultaneously released two books—"Desperation" and "The Regulators," a pair of novels (the latter under his nom de plume Richard Bachman)—with a repertory company of identically named players in radically different predicaments. King's other over-the-top feat that year was "The Green Mile," a beat-the-clock six-volume serial novel that one week occupied the first, fourth, tenth, twelfth, fourteenth, and fifteenth positions on the *Times* paperback-best-seller list, which his novel "Rose Madder" had vacated some months before. To the average tortoise with a word processor, King's sheer productivity can arouse as much dread as any creature lurching across the pages of his horror stories.

Introducing King when he gave a reading at Princeton last year, Joyce Carol Oates referred to him as a "great

King's horrors seduce us with scenes and places that are reassuringly familiar. Photograph by Duane Michals.



writer... both a storyteller and an inventor of startling images and metaphors, which linger long in the memory and would seem to spring from a collective, unconscious, and thoroughly domestic-American soil." King's prolific habits make him, like Oates, suspect in certain circles, and his immense popularity compounds the resentment. Hence, the verdict a while back by the critic Leslie Fiedler that "none of us will be remembered as long or revered as deeply as our contemporary, Stephen King" wasn't embraced by those arbiters of the official canon who, without bothering to read King, feel comfortable dismissing him as a hack.

Critics tempted to punish King for his success have frequently seen fit to review his contracts and the prepublication hype along with his texts. "Bag of Bones," perhaps more than his other books, will have to bear this burden. In June, King's new publisher, Scribner, in

the opening volley of a promotional barrage, dispensed nine thousand advance "readers' copies" of "Bag of Bones," along with an audiocassette that included a half-hour King monologue and his reading of a chapter excerpt, aimed mainly at bookstore clerks, the most likely bell-ringers in any word-of-mouth campaign. Next came the obligatory Web site, along with refrigerator magnets and a cross-word puzzle (both motifs in the novel) and, in general, the sort of all-pervasive marketing assault that makes "synergy" such an obnoxious concept. (Scribner is a division of Simon & Schuster, which is owned by Viacom Inc.) At Scribner, September has been designated Stephen King Month—"Bag of Bones" is to be the imprint's only new title during that period—and, if all goes well, when the first million three hundred sixty thousand hardcover copies appear on bookstore shelves, a couple of weeks from now, prospective buyers either will be

oblivious of or will have stopped caring about the indecorous spectacle that brought King to this juncture in his career.

A YEAR ago, King delivered to his longtime publisher—Viking, which is an imprint of Penguin Putnam—an all but polished draft of "Bag of Bones," whereupon a doomed negotiation got under way. As if to taunt Penguin Putnam before the bargaining began, King spiked the manuscript with some titillating dropping of real-life publishing-industry figures' names. For instance, Noonan, a Putnam author, at one point is badgered by his agent, who mentions Phyllis Grann, the Penguin Putnam president, who was certain to become a key player in the haggling over "Bag of Bones." The agent asks, "Are you dissatisfied with Putnam?" and adds, "I... think Phyllis Grann would do damned near anything to address any concerns you might have."

Perhaps she would for Michael Noonan but not, it turned out, for Stephen King. What could have been a straightforward enough transaction soon degenerated into an unhappy stalemate that terminated when King's attorney and business manager, Arthur Greene, sent letters to several other publishers announcing his client's availability. This tactic guaranteed that the matter would get an airing in the press, and the resulting news accounts flattered none of the participants, least of all King, who was portrayed as venal and perhaps past his prime. King arranged to be far from the negotiating table—he not only took off on a cross-country motorcycle trip, the country in question was Australia—while Greene sought an eighteen-million-dollar advance against royalties for "Bag of Bones." Complicating this silliness was the recent corporate merger that had brought under the same roof Viking, which was already part of Penguin, and Putnam, a house where a new strategic plan would be in order if Tom Clancy suddenly lost his ability to push a few buttons every eighteen or twenty-four months to sell a couple million or so good-guy, bad-guy techno-thrillers. There were rumors that King had demanded a contract no less lucrative than Clancy's. Never mind that King, who cares plenty about cultivating his literary reputation, had no need to get into a pissing contest with the likes of Clancy.



"It appears to be a heroic hunting epic followed by a retraction."

Nor, of course, did he need the money. (In the 1997 *Forbes* survey of the world's forty most ridiculously overpaid entertainers, King occupied the No. 8 position, with an estimated haul of fifty million dollars, an increase of sixteen million from 1996.)

In retrospect, King blames mainly himself for the P.R. maladroitness—"I never should have asked for all that money. It was so stupid . . . a bad move"—yet at the same time assumes that this chapter of his professional life will have a merrier outcome than those in many of his fictional inventions. His agreement with Scribner is, in most respects, unprecedented. For each of three books—"Bag of Bones," a collection of stories, and a nonfiction work on the craft of writing—he receives a two-million-dollar payment that technically isn't an advance because he and Scribner have a profit-sharing arrangement that splits the net roughly fifty-five/forty-five in his favor. He benefits from the enthusiasm of a publisher eager to prove that it can attract fresh readers as well as regain those who checked out years ago, when the agonies recounted in books like "Cujo" and "Pet Sematary" and "Gerald's Game" became more than they could bear. And, in the long run, he has the potential to make out better than if Penguin Putnam had coughed up his asking price. Also, if one accepts that, at King's rarefied altitude, two million dollars is a token guarantee, the greed quotient has been neutralized. His only lingering regret, he told me, is that he should have waived even that up-front sum.

"The purpose of an advance," King said, "is to keep a writer going when he says, 'I need to pay my rent, my mortgage. I need this to keep them from repossessing my car.' I already have the freedom to write. Elvis Presley once said something like 'I looked around myself when I was a teen-ager and saw I was in a tiny little pasture with all these other cows, chomping at grass and shitting. I broke through a fence somehow, I don't know how I did it, and I was in a bigger pasture. I looked and there were still fences all around, but I was by myself. So I grazed.'"

"I don't have to be in a small pasture or a big pasture. All I have to do is write books. So I can't be going and taking a huge number in terms of the dough, because then I have to go out and justify

the advance. It commits me to too much. If I could do it all over again, I'd have asked Scribner for a dollar a book."

Plus, well, sure, his share of the profits.

"THE desire to please—or try to—seems hard-wired into my system," King once told a gathering at his alma mater, the University of Maine. "When I was a kid, my mother sometimes used to say, 'Stevie, if you were a girl, you'd always be pregnant.'" Nothing I observed during the couple of days I spent in the village of Center Lovell, King's summer retreat, led me to suspect otherwise. His manner was affable, self-deprecating, free of pretense—whether he was humoring me or a café proprietor who leaned across the counter and sagely advised, "You know what you need to do next is write a book about mosquitoes." In the mornings he wrote, and in the afternoons and early evenings we chatted. At his request, I arranged my visit for a time when his wife, Tabitha, was tending to business in Bangor, where they live the rest of the year. She's a writer with seven published novels to her credit who can do without certain intrusions—say, pilgrims mainly curious about the King with thirty-two novels on the shelf. Given the frequency with which her husband adverted to her superior wisdom, she might as well have stuck around. The Kings have been married twenty-seven years and have three children. The youngest, Owen, who is a college senior, wandered in and out. Another son, Joe, a writer who's begun publishing short stories in small magazines, was staying at a guesthouse across the lake and also dropped by. Naomi, the eldest, was in New York, where she recently began studying for the Unitarian ministry.

King is six feet three and ambulates in a loose, slightly gawky manner that reminds one of a label *Time* pinned on him several years back: "The world's oldest teen-age author." This referred mainly to the prevailing themes of his work and to his absorption with pop culture, but it also describes his everyday getup—blue-jeans, T-shirt, beat-up sneakers—and his mushroom-farmer complexion, the look of an avid indoorsman who spends a lot of time noodling with a guitar, listening to headbanger rock music, watching videos, and peering into a computer

screen. He has a chipmunk grin, dark-brown hair that sweeps the top of his wire-rims, and eyes that I gather are blue, though it's hard to tell because the lenses of his glasses are so thick. The official publication date of "Bag of Bones" falls the day after his fifty-first birthday.

The four or five cigarettes King smokes each evening are an improvement over his former two-and-a-half-pack habit; he chews a lot of toothpicks. In 1988, he quit drinking—he says cocaine was also a problem—and started attending Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, which he still does. King weighs a hundred and ninety pounds, thirty less than he did a year ago, when he undertook a daily walking regimen.

One afternoon, I watched Stephen and Owen play tennis on a neighbor's court. Both would prefer that I keep off the record what I witnessed. Let me just say this: One plays badly, and the other lost. The stakes were provocative—the loser owed the winner a homemade, rather than store-bought, audio version of Graham Greene's "The End of the Affair"—and the banter was Grand Slam calibre.

OWEN (*inflected like Billy Bob Thornton in "Sling Blade"*): I reckon you're gonna double-fault here.

STEPHEN (*same inflection*): I reckon I won't. I reckon after I'm done whuppin' you I'm gonna put my arm around you. . . . (*Normal voice*) And, you know, that's all right, Owen. Even if you lose, you'll always be a winner in my heart.

STEPHEN (*later, wilting in the heat, pausing for a drink of water between games*): I just got an idea for a story. A really good idea. There's this writer, and he agrees to be interviewed by this magazine. So this journalist comes to visit. And the writer is, like, this great guy, you know what I'm saying? And he's got this son, only the son has this clubfoot. And the reporter discovers the writer is cheating on close points. It's always "Oh, sorry! Out!" And the clubfoot kid is better, but the reporter sees that this revered, wonderful guy is cheating his clubfooted son. It's a Roald Dahl story, don't you think, if it had a twist, a McGuffin.

STEPHEN (*on the brink of defeat, desperate, shameless*): Say, Owen, have you read the new John Irving, "A Widow for One Year"? You know, there's a squash



sequence in that book. This girl's always wanted to beat her father at squash. Her whole life she's waited for this. And she finally does, and it kills him. Literally kills him. What do you think of that, Owen?

THAT evening, King fixed us dinner—baked breaded chicken breasts, salad, yellow rice, iced fruit tea—and afterward we repaired to his small study, where a laptop computer rested on a rolltop desk. While we talked, he autographed hundreds of bookplates for a British limited edition of “Bag of Bones.”

King's only nonfiction book, “Danse Macabre,” is a lively survey of the horror genre in movies and literature that interweaves anecdote, history, and criticism. In it, he digresses autobiographically with a story he says his mother, Ruth Pillsbury King, told him about himself—an incident he couldn't remember, because he was four years old when it occurred. One day he went to play with a neighbor child who lived near a railroad line. About an hour later, he returned, “white as a ghost,” and didn't speak for the rest of the day:

I would not tell her why I'd not waited to be picked up or phoned that I wanted to come home; I would not tell her why my chum's mom hadn't walked me back but had allowed me to come alone.

It turned out that the kid I had been playing with had been run over by a freight train while playing on or crossing the tracks (years later, my mother told me they had picked up the pieces in a wicker basket). My mom never knew if I had been near him when it happened, if it had occurred before I even arrived, or if I had wandered away after it happened. Perhaps she had her own ideas on the subject. But as I've said, I have no memory of the incident at all; only of having been told about it some years after the fact.

Remarkably, instead of citing this episode—one that at the time apparently struck him dumb—to account for his preoccupation with phenomena ghastly and brutal, he argues precisely the opposite. “I think that writers are made, not born or created out of dreams or childhood trauma—that becoming a writer . . . is a direct result of conscious will,” he continues. “Of course there has to be some talent involved, but talent is a dreadfully cheap commodity. . . . What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work and study; a constant process of honing.”

Experience yields subject matter, but

WIRE

As I roved out this morning at daybreak
I took a shortcut
through the pine forest, following the high-tension wires
past the timberline
till I stumbled upon a makeshift hide or shooting box
from which a command wire seemed to run

intermittently along the ski run
or firebreak.
I glanced into the hideout. A school lunchbox.
A pear so recently cut
I thought of Ceylon. A can of Valvoline.
Crocodile clips. Sri Lanka, I mean. A hank of wire

that might come in handy if ever I'd want to hot-wire
a motor and make a run
for the border. From just beyond my line
of vision I glimpsed something, or someone, break
cover for an instant. A shaved head, maybe, or a crew cut.
Jumping up like a jack-in-the-box

before ducking back down. Then a distant raking through
the gearbox
of a truck suddenly gone haywire
on this hillside of hillsides in Connecticut

that doesn't make subject matter synonymous with motive. Elsewhere in “Danse Macabre,” King relates in a few paragraphs, with transcendent self-restraint, everything worth knowing about his father, Donald King. Dad was “a man with an itchy foot,” or, as Ruth King is quoted in another context, “Stephen, your father was the only vacuum-cleaner salesman Electrolux ever had that sold vacuum cleaners to widows at two o'clock in the morning.” Ruth also used to tell Stephen that one day when he was two and his brother, David, was four, Donald King announced that he was going out to buy cigarettes, and he never returned. Cheap and easy though it might be to rake his father over the coals, King says, in effect, Why bother? (“I don't remember him at all.”) Instead, he writes of an ironic and revelatory moment when he was eleven or twelve and, in the attic of his aunt and uncle's garage, in Durham, Maine, he happened upon “a box of my father's books . . . paperbacks from the mid-forties”:

A treasure trove of old Avon paperbacks. One of these was an Avon “sampler” . . . It contained stories by Frank Belknap Long (“The Hounds of Tindalos”),

Zelia Bishop (“The Curse of Yig”), and a host of other tales culled from the early days of *Weird Tales* magazine. Two of the others were novels by A. Merritt—*Burn, Witch, Burn* (not to be confused with the later Fritz Leiber novel, *Conjure Wife*) and *The Metal Monster*.

The pick of the litter, however, was an H. P. Lovecraft collection from 1947 called *The Lurking Fear and Other Stories*. . . . It was my first encounter with serious fantasy-horror fiction. . . .

I took the books out of the attic with me. My aunt, who was a grammar school teacher and the soul of practicality down to her shoes, disapproved of them strenuously. . . .

A week or two later all of those books disappeared, and I never saw them again. I've always suspected that my Aunt Ethelyn might have been an unindicted co-conspirator in that case . . . not that it mattered in the long run. I was on my way.

IT'S not the vanished father that matters but the men in the box in the attic, fraternally linked to the boys in the basement. For nine years, the family lived here and there in the Midwest and in Connecticut, finally settling in Durham, which King thinks of as his childhood home town. Along the way, his mother, “with a great and sometimes eccentric sense of humor . . . somehow

brought back some truck on a bomb run,
brought back so much with which I'd hoped to break—
the hard line

yet again refusing to toe the line,
the bullet and the ballot box,
the joyride, the jailbreak,
Janet endlessly singing "The Men Behind the Wire,"
the endless rerun
of Smithfield, La Mon, Enniskillen, of bodies cut

to ribbons as I heard the truck engine cut
and, you might have read as much between the lines,
ducked down here myself behind the hide. As if I myself
were on the run.
The truck driver handing a box-
cutter, I'm sure, to the bald guy. A pair of real live wires.
I've listened to them all day now, torn between making
a break

for it and their talk of the long run, the short term, of
boxing clever,
fish or cut bait, make or break,
the end of the line, right down to the wire.

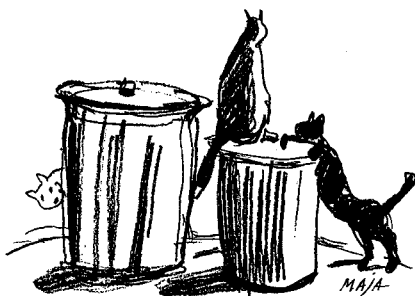
—PAUL MULDOON

kept things together." She was a "talented pianist"—her son donated the funds to build the Ruth King Theatre, at Milton Academy, where his two older children attended prep school—but she ended up working at "a succession of low-paying jobs: presser in a laundry, doughnut-maker on the night shift at a bakery, store clerk, housekeeper." The move to Durham came about because Ruth's siblings had drafted her to care for their ancient parents, an experience that was transformed thirty years later into the tour de force "Dolores Claiborne," a morally riveting confession from the earthy mouth of a sixty-six-year-old Maine coastal-island native with a granite-hard life but not a grain of self-pity.

"Those were very unhappy years for my mother," King told me. "She had no money, she couldn't buy clothes, everything was handed down to her. Relatives brought canned goods. David and I never saw cash. It was like we'd become sharecroppers. She was always on duty. My grandmother had total senile dementia and was incontinent. We had an old wringer washing machine. When my

mother would hang out the diapers in the winter her hands would crack and bleed and she'd have to cover them with this lanolin sheep stuff. It wasn't good."

Yet there's scant evidence of neurotic residue. A serious engagement with a wide range of social and political issues forms the undercurrent of much of King's work, but it is free of cant or dogma. His characters speak up, never lapsing into thumbsucking anomie. King himself, rather than picking at emotional scabs, taps directly into the underlying marrow, and, though there are notable exceptions, a consistent message resonates: "It really isn't about your parents; it's about you're afraid." King's balm is his generosity as a storyteller. "He's got to be the most casually dismissed



great storyteller we have," his friend the humorist Dave Barry believes. "What makes writing interesting is the story. Except for English majors and English teachers, most people like a story. And Steve just has the capacity to see a story everywhere and in everything."

What makes King's horrors so seductive is his skill at rendering scenes and places that reassure us with their bland familiarity. We've been taught, of course, that soon enough some razor-clawed dagger-fanged slime-dripping beast—some *thing* in a *very bad* mood—is going to pop out of the fridge and leave behind a mess that resists tidying up. But until that moment arrives we're lulled by characters not unlike ourselves, recognizable by their middle-American diction, mundane concerns, and old-shoe habits.

The static that the preadolescent Stevie King sought refuge from wasn't emanating from the exterior world but from inside his own head, and he opted early for the writing cure—what one of his writer heroes has described as falling "through the hole in the paper." He was twelve when he started submitting stories to pulp magazines, and his mother blessed this ambition, providing a secondhand typewriter that was soon missing the "n" key—a machine that turns up, to excruciatingly funny effect, in "Misery." A scholarship enabled him to attend the University of Maine at Orono, a debt he has repaid repeatedly—most recently with a four-year, four-million-dollar gift, half earmarked for faculty salaries, half for undergraduate financial aid. The summer before his freshman year, he wrote a novel, "Rage," which, like three other early novels, he held off publishing until after the successes of "Carrie," "Salem's Lot," and "The Shining"—and, even then, as paperback originals by Richard Bachman. ("Dark-toned, despairing . . . not a very nice guy," Bachman's creator blithely described him. In 1984, when King wrote "Thinner" and decided, on a whim, to give Bachman the byline—the doppelgänger had not yet been unmasked—a Literary Guild reader lauded the novel as "what Stephen King would write like if Stephen King could really write.")

"Rage," a chilling monologue by an extremely angry eighteen-year-old who takes a gun to school, fatally shoots two teachers, and holds a roomful of classmates hostage, is the only book that

King deliberately intends to let go out of print. Beyond its spooky prescience—it was written more than thirty years ago—it displays an extraordinarily confident technical control.

I asked King, “Do you remember the guy who wrote that book?”

A long, long pause. Then: “I don’t know. I think I sort of do. It’s like that chapter in ‘Bag of Bones’ when Noonan, describing a dream, talks about a time when he was really sick. I remember it that way—it’s like remembering yourself when you’re really, really sick. Because I was an adolescent. Adolescents are sick people. Your hormones are crazy, everything’s crazy. I told my kids, ‘If you look back on high school as the happiest days of your life you got a big fucking problem.’ I wrote ‘Rage’ in a second-floor room, under an eave, in the middle of summer. It was broiling hot, I was wearing a pair of shorts, dripping sweat, smelling like a monkey.

“The people who taught me the most about being a novelist were Max Brand and John D. MacDonald and Richard Matheson and James M. Cain. Their work was always about story and at the same time there’s a poetry to their books. Cain writes a scene in ‘The Postman Always Rings Twice,’ where Frank rips Cora’s blouse and says, as if she’d been in a car wreck, ‘You got that climbing out. You caught it in the door handle.’ Then he punches her in the eye and says, ‘And this you don’t know how you got.’ I thought if I could write a line like that I could be happy for the rest of my life, at least for the rest of the day. I remember the first time I came up with a line and said, ‘Nobody ever wrote that before.’ It was in a story I wrote in high school. These two kids were in a cafeteria having a fight, and the narrator says, ‘My soda went flat. My piece of cake just sat there and got a little older.’ It’s not a great line, but it was a real line. It felt like a smart line.”

As an undergraduate, King received solid encouragement from two professors, Edward Holmes and Burton Hatlen; the scholarships King endowed are named in honor of Holmes. King also subsidizes the National Poetry Foundation, of which Hatlen is director. One of its missions is to publish the work of previously uncollected poets. This extends King’s boosterism of writers he refers to as “real American crafts-

AT THE MUSEUMS

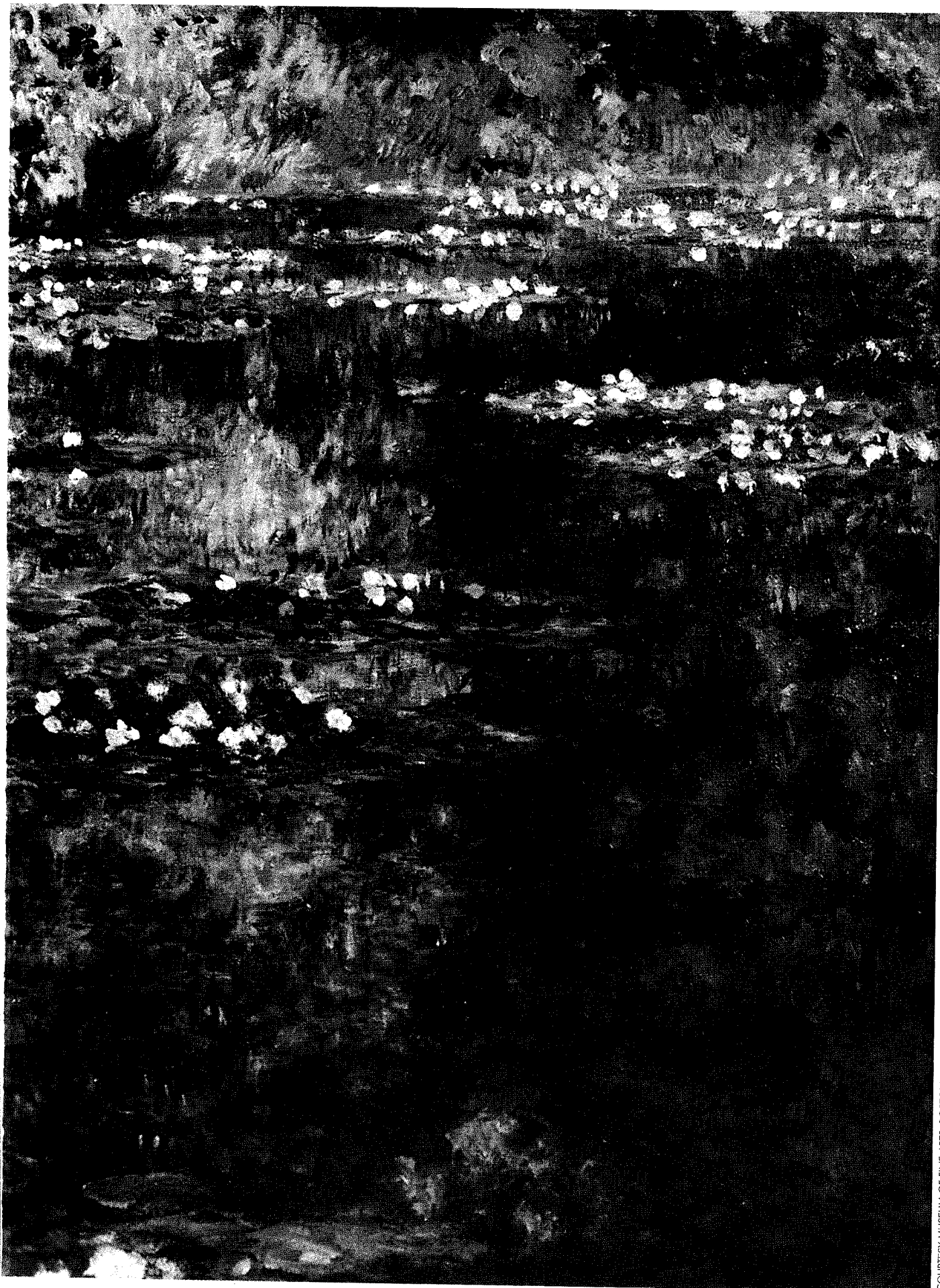
LATE LIGHT

CLAUDE MONET is to large museums as Ludwig van Beethoven is to symphony orchestras—a well that never runs dry. The quintessential Impressionist, whose 1872 painting “Impression, Sunrise” gave the movement its name, outlived all his contemporaries and kept working until shortly before his death, in 1926, at the age of eighty-six. The paintings he did in his last two decades, which for many years were dismissed as “formless,” are now considered among the primary sources of modern art, as influential as the work of Paul Cézanne. “Monet in the 20th Century,” which opens September 20th at the Museum of Fine Arts, in Boston (its only showing in this country), is the first large museum exhibition to focus exclusively on his late work.

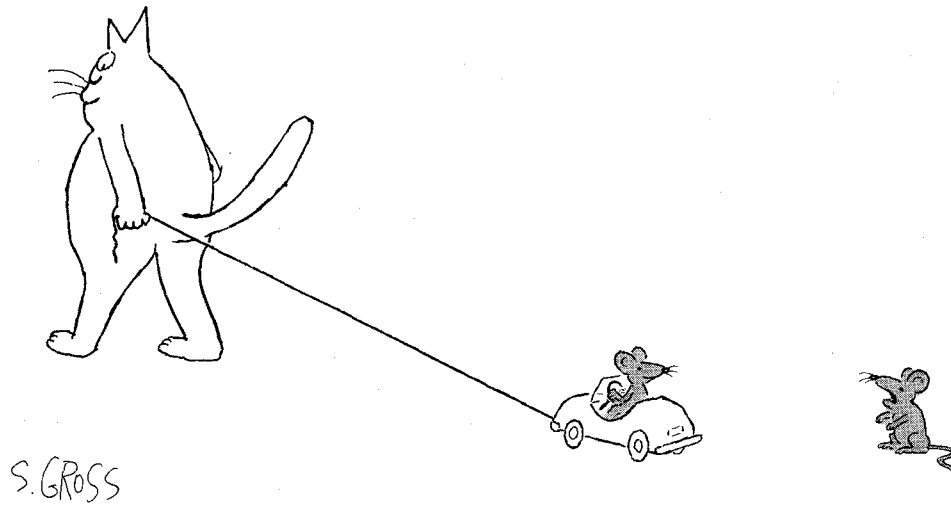
Monet painted more than four hundred and fifty pictures between 1900 and 1926, about three hundred of which took their motif from the gardens he planted at Giverny, forty miles northwest of Paris. The 1904 “Water Lilies” at right is one of a series begun the year before, whose lightness and airiness marked a radical departure from his earlier garden paintings. In 1905, he would push his composition still further, eliminating any suggestion of the pond’s shoreline and showing only the water’s surface, in which sky, clouds, and trees are reflected under varying conditions of light and atmosphere.

Famous and wealthy, revered as France’s greatest living landscape artist, Monet continued into his eighties to develop a radical new aesthetic, culminating in the great, multi-panel paintings of “Water Lilies” completed in his last years. (The Boston show includes a roomful of these works.) By this time, he had travelled a long way from classic Impressionism. In the late murals, as the critic John House writes, “we are presented with a single, unbroken visual field... [where] the overall effect is one of integration and harmony, with nothing to disturb the viewer’s solitary immersion in the private experience of viewing.” —CALVIN TOMKINS





COURTESY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON



"For God's sake, think! Why is he being so nice to you?"

men who've been overlooked," and he cites Thomas Williams ("The Hair of Harold Roux"), Don Robertson ("The Ideal Genuine Man"), David Goodis ("Nightfall"), and Jack Ketchum ("Off Season"). Hatlen, who taught King contemporary poetry and twentieth-century American literature, recalls a "fairly assertive student," possessed of strident and fearless opinions. He'd already covered some Shakespeare but was especially taken with Faulkner and Steinbeck, and also Jim Thompson and other proletarians from the gritty-realism school. Despite King's omnivorousness, Hatlen, who still teaches at the university—including, last fall, a freshman-level course called "Stephen and Tabitha King as Maine Writers"—suspects that significant gaps remain: "Has he read Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky?" (The answer: "Anna Karenina" and no.)

King first met Tabitha Spruce when both had jobs in the campus library, but the attraction grew when they enrolled in a poetry-writing seminar taught by Hatlen. "She's a good poet and a wonderful prose writer," King told me. "She knew what she was doing, and she could explain it. There was none of that hippie bullshit about the great spirit coming down so I wrote this poem and if we discuss what it means it means that capitalism is good or bad and 'Off the pigs.' She was the only poet I was ever involved with in a seminar session in college who dared use words like 'antecedent' and 'predicate.'"

Michael Alpert, a poet himself as well as a master printer who helps to run

Philtrum Press, an enterprise King established in the early eighties to publish sporadic, private editions, usually of his own writing, believes that the Kings he befriended in college are the same people he knows today.

"Steve had a very strong point of view," Alpert told me. "He didn't believe in the official canon—the Harvard curriculum—at all. He thought many of the more popular writers had more to say. He didn't just talk about subject matter, he talked about language. The sensibility was already formed back then. His work is truly original. If you look at English literature of the nineteenth century, those writers who aren't of the upper class are considered kind of misfits. That carried over into academic circles right through the nineteen-sixties. For Steve to say not only that that was limited but to do something about it—to create a body of work that's an alternative—is astounding."

"People who are a bit snobbish think they can read his work from a distance. But some of his writing is so sneaky. I read about halfway through 'The Dark Half' and had a nightmare about my mother digging her way out of her grave and I had to stop. The energy in Steve's writing goes directly to one's dream life. It bypasses intellect. Skeptics really are undone by it. I've become deeply frightened by his writing at times, in a way that's not pleasant one bit. I'm not sure whether that's a compliment. As he's spinning a tale, it's as though the story is leading him into avenues where he never intended to go. Most people have ta-

boos. When something becomes unacceptable they won't allow the story to go there. Steve, apparently, won't allow himself to stop. He won't let his own fear hinder him from continuing."

In 1971, Stephen and Tabitha married and set up housekeeping in a rented trailer in the rural town of Hermon. Like mother, like son: he'd been working in a commercial laundry for a dollar and sixty cents an hour (fodder for his short story "The Mangler" and a Bachman novel, "Roadwork"). A job teaching high-school English materialized, at an annual salary of six thousand four hundred dollars. "I thought by teaching school

I was insuring myself a middle-class life," he told me. "I didn't think it meant poverty. Teaching school is like having jumper cables hooked to your ears, draining all the juice out of you. You come home, you have papers to correct, and you don't feel like writing. We were planning to have a car, we were supposed to have a real life, and we were worse off than when I was in the laundry. In fact, in the summer I had to go back to the laundry. Tabby worked at Dunkin' Donuts because it was literally the only job she could get. I worked days, and she'd work from seven until eleven at night, sometimes seven to two. We had a baby, then two babies. We couldn't afford a babysitter. We had the phone disconnected. We had an old TV we got at a yard sale. That was the only time in my entire life when I thought, 'You're living in a fool's dream. This is not going to happen! You're just like everybody else who says 'I was born to do x or y' but never does it. It got to the point where I was saying to myself, 'The best you can hope for is they'll give you the debate club next year and you'll get an extra two hundred dollars.'"

I asked, "Would Tabby say you're a calculating fellow?"

"No, she'd say, 'Steve's never planned ahead for anything.'"

His office was the laundry room of the trailer. The stories he'd begun selling to men's magazines like *Cavalier* and *Gent*—with titles like "Graveyard Shift" and "The Boogeyman"—provided an occasional source of extra cash, and when they were published he diligently sent photocopies to his mother, taking care to

black out, on the jump pages, the cheesy ads for 8-mm. films featuring talent like Chesty Morgan. More or less through the slush pile, he'd found his way to Bill Thompson, an editor at Doubleday, which in 1973 agreed to publish a short story that had grown into a short novel—"Carrie," about a small-town Maine teen-age girl with telekinetic powers who, to avenge serial humiliations at the hands of casually cruel schoolmates and a religious-fanatic mother, unleashes a fiery cataclysm. (Copies of the hardcover first printing of "Carrie" have become so scarce that when Elaine Koster, who as publisher at Dutton N.A.L. had bought the paperback rights, came across a specimen not long ago marked at five hundred dollars, she recognized it as a steal—even though the price happened to be one-fifth of King's original advance from Doubleday.) Koster's first reading of "Carrie," she says, "revealed Steve's talent for transcending the horror genre; I was most impressed by his perceptive and sensitive portrayal of Carrie as an outsider who had only her own considerable strength to rely upon." At her urging, Dutton N.A.L. made an extravagant peremptory offer for the paperback rights—four hundred thousand dollars—which still turned out to be a terrific bargain.

WHEN "Carrie" came out, Ruth King was working at Pineland Training Center, a home for the mentally retarded. "She served meals, cleaned up shit, wore a green uniform," King said. "One day I went to Pineland to tell her I'd sold this book. She was pulling a truck of dishes. She looked so strung out. She'd lost forty pounds and was dying of cancer but it hadn't even been diagnosed. I looked at her and said, 'Mom, you're done.' And she was. That was her last day working. I didn't have the paperback money yet but I borrowed from a bank. She went to stay with my brother, in Mexico, Maine, and she lived another eight months."

King disparages much of his early work and says he avoids rereading it: "Mostly I cringe. I really cringe. I think, Boy, this is raw." This is a highly subjective appraisal, of course, and one that fails to credit, for example, "Carrie"'s narrative inventiveness—a collage of third-person omniscience, interior monologues, news dispatches, and excerpts from mem-

oirs, letters, sworn testimony, and scientific papers. Virtually every subsequent King novel has been optioned or sold to filmmakers—as have a dozen or so shorter pieces, too—but none had as rewarding an impact as Brian DePalma's adaptation of "Carrie." Its release, in 1976, helped sell an additional million paperbacks. By then, King had already published the vampire novel "'Salem's Lot," sold its paperback rights for a half-million bucks, moved to Colorado for a year and discovered the setting for "The Shining," moved back to Maine, and bought a house.

In "Danse Macabre," King recalls this point in his life: "Suddenly all of my friends thought I was rich. That was bad enough, scary enough; what was worse was the fact that maybe I was. People began to talk to me about investments, about tax shelters, about moving to California. These were changes enough to try and cope with, but on top of them, the America I had grown up in seemed to be crumbling beneath my feet." In response, he wrote "The Stand," a post-

apocalyptic opus his most ardent champions believe will be his most enduring. Imagining "the destruction of THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT" became an actual relief. No more Ronald McDonald. No more *Gong Show* or *Soap* on TV—just soothing snow! No more terrorists! *No more bullshit!* . . . In *The Stand* I got a chance to scrub the whole human race, and *it was fun!*"

King's fantasy wasn't absolute nihilism but, rather, a neo-Edenic tabula rasa: "By simple agreement with myself to allow a few survivors—no survivors, no story, am I right?—I was able to envision a world in which all the nuclear stockpiles would simply rust away and some kind of normal moral, political, and ecological balance would return to the mad universe we call home. . . .

"In spite of its apocalyptic theme, *The Stand* is mostly a hopeful book that echoes Albert Camus's remark that *happiness, too, is inevitable*."

"More prosaically, my mother used to tell my brother David and me to 'hope for the best and expect the worst,' and



"My problem is I grew up too fast."

that expresses the book I remember writing as well as anything."

At more than eleven hundred printed pages, "The Stand" is King's longest book—that is, if one doesn't count as a single work his multivolume "Dark Tower" epic, which is now thirty years in the writing, with four installments published and at least three to go. An unabridged version of "The Stand" wasn't issued until 1990; at the insistence of the Doubleday accounting department, King had amputated four hundred manuscript pages from the 1978 edition. (After which, still scalpel-happy—he had a problem with what he perceived to be Doubleday's plantation mentality, plus some complaints about money—he severed his tie with the house and moved to Viking.) The novelist David Foster Wallace, who has taught "Carrie" and "The Stand" to undergraduates at Illinois State, applauds the stylistic clarity of the early King books. "He's one of the first people to talk about real Americans and how they live, to capture real American dialogue in all its, like, foulmouthed grandeur," Wallace says. "He has a deadly ear for the way people speak, and for the nasty little domestic shit they pull on each other. Students come to me and a lot of them have been led to believe that there's good stuff and bad stuff, literary books and popular books, stuff that's redemptive and commercial shit—with a sharp line drawn between the two categories. It's good to show them that there's a certain amount of blurring. Surface-wise, King's work is a bit televisual, but there's really a lot going on."

SEVERAL years ago, King, who plays rhythm guitar, was invited to join a classic-rock-and-roll band whose other members included Dave Barry, Amy Tan, Roy Blount, Jr., Barbara Kingsolver, and a dozen or so other writers and music critics, plus a few professional musicians. The Rock Bottom Remainers played their first gig at an American Booksellers Association convention in the spring of 1992, did a six-city tour the following year, and performed most recently in Bangor last spring. Though these events invariably benefit charities that combat illiteracy and homelessness and the like, King shares the sentiment of Amy Tan, who claims she'd happily show up for a kill-the-whales fundraiser if it afforded yet another opportu-

nity to dress up in a black-leather-and-leopardskin biker-slut S & M outfit and strut through her unexampled renditions of "Leader of the Pack" and "These Boots Are Made for Walking." King's showstopper is a customized version of the tragic ballad "Last Kiss" which contains such improvised lyrics as "I saw my baby lying there; I brushed her liver from my hair." Barry has a vivid memory of a concert, in either Atlanta or Nashville, during which the suspense novelist and bass player Ridley Pearson sidled over and said, "Check out the woman in front of Steve." A worshipful female fan had raised her hands above her head and all ten of her fingernails were on fire. Pearson told Barry, "I don't ever want to be *that* famous."

Fame, King long ago learned, has its vicissitudes. In Bangor, his house is a stately red-clapboard-with-cream-trim twenty-two-room Victorian pile that sits on a huge, exquisitely manicured lot in a quiet neighborhood a few blocks from downtown. Even if it didn't have a wrought-iron fence festooned with cartoonishly menacing bats and a dragon, it would be a major tourist attraction. Another must-see is the city's most monumental testament to King's philanthropy, the splendid-looking Shawn T. Mansfield Baseball Complex, dedicated six years ago in memory of the son of a Little League coach and friend of King's who died at fourteen of cerebral palsy.

King writes at home but maintains a business office in a nondescript one-story building near the airport. His administrative assistants, Julie Eugley and Marsha DeFilippo, answer the five hundred to a thousand letters from readers that arrive each month. "A lot of fan mail isn't fan mail at all but people sending religious pamphlets and letters with no return address, alerting Steve that they're praying for his soul," Eugley told me when I dropped in a few days after my visit to Center Lovell. One four-drawer file cabinet is reserved for correspondence from "disturbed or disturbing" people. "A couple of times a month we

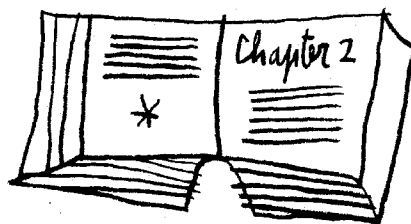
get one from someone who's really out there," DeFilippo said. "Those are a lot scarier than any of Steve's books." In 1991, a young man named Erik Keene, laboring under the impression that he had provided the original story for "Miserery" and eager to discuss a sequel with King, showed up at the office. A few weeks later, he threw a brick through the kitchen window when Tabby was home alone. Fittingly, Keene was holed up in a third-floor belfry when the police arrested him. Then, a few years back, there was the guitar-toting stalker from California who spent several months in Bangor, playing Beatles songs on the sidewalk and passing out leaflets detailing King's role as the triggerman in the assassination of John Lennon.

"What are you afraid of?" I once asked King, a throwaway existential question.

"Whaddya got?" he replied reflexively. "You look at things a certain way and you're not fearful. You look at 'em another way and you are."

That day in Bangor, in King's office, we watched a videotape of footage from "Storm of the Century," a six-hour television miniseries written by him which will air on ABC in 1999. (King has a cameo role in "Storm," and in several other adaptations of his work.) Earlier this year, he completed a screenplay draft for a theatrical version of "Desperation." A film of "The Green Mile," starring Tom Hanks, recently went into production, and a "Rose Madder" movie for HBO is also in the works. In October, a film based upon the novella "Apt Pupil" appears in theatres. At one point, King excused himself to keep an appointment with an eye doctor. He suffers from acute genetic myopia—other than the box of books in the attic, his only significant inheritance from his father—and is predisposed to macular degeneration, a progressive condition that in time could severely limit his vision.

When he returned, I followed him home, tailing his Harley-Davidson. Because he and Owen had another tennis date, he gave me an abbreviated tour. We were in the room where he writes, a loft-like sitting area adjacent to his bedroom, when I asked to see his library. He led me through a hidden passageway in a bookcase—straight out of a Vincent Price movie—down a couple of flights of stairs, along a corridor, and into a spacious subterranean chamber permeated



with an air of perfect orderliness. At one end was a round marble-top table, at the other a large desk with computer equipment, and in between well-cushioned furniture, a pool table, a TV, a stereo, and, surrounding everything, books, books, and books, lining floor-to-ceiling cherrywood shelves. I was reminded of a conversation we'd had in Center Lovell, when I arrived at noon one day and he announced that that very morning he'd finished the final story in a collection, thus completing the second of the three books in his Scribner contract.

"And now they owe you another two million dollars," I said.

"I haven't even thought about that money," he declared. "I've thought about how good it feels to finish a story and to fulfill another part of my contract. Let me put it this way: I won't do anything with my two million. It goes to the back of the line. You know, every week Arthur Greene sends me a check for four hundred dollars. I cash it. If I don't spend it all, I bank it. The credit-card bills? All the bills go to Arthur. I never write a check. But I did get something new last month that I'm very proud of—a bank-machine card. I've used it a couple of times just to see if it would really work. You know what money in my pocket means? It means I can buy all the books I want. I guess I have with books what Imelda Marcos had with shoes. We've helped lots of different libraries in Maine—I can't even imagine how much we give away each year to libraries—but I haven't taken a book out of the library more than four times in the last twelve years. I buy what I want because I can."

We were standing in the middle of the room, and King pointed to an adjacent shelf and said, "Did you notice the house next door? A retired neurosurgeon lives there and he's getting on in years. I've been thinking wouldn't it be great if, after old Doc Irwin dies, I bought his house and gutted it and just filled it with books and—just like with that bookcase upstairs—this spot would be the underground passageway to that house. You'd ride through a tunnel on a little trolley. I fantasize about this and Tabby says,



"You have the right to a phalanx of attorneys. If you cannot afford a phalanx of attorneys, a phalanx of attorneys will be appointed to you."

'Why do we need to do that?' And you know what I tell her?" He got about three inches from my face and raised his voice into a gleeful shout: "Because we could!"

"Nightmares & Dreamscapes," King's 1994 short-story collection, includes a prefatory essay in which he reminisces about the wholesale credulity of his childhood: "When I was a kid I believed everything I was told, everything I read, and every dispatch sent out by my own overheated imagination." He had a particular weakness for the "Ripley's Believe It or Not!" paperback series—"the world's most wonderful sideshow." Rhetorically, he asks, "Were all of Ripley's fabulous curiosities and human monsters real? In this context that hardly seems relevant. They were real to me. . . . Remember it's belief we're talking about here, and belief is the cradle of myth. I think that myth and imagination are, in fact, nearly interchangeable concepts, and that belief is the wellspring of both."

Was that the place, then, where the boys in the basement did their heavy lifting? And what about another comment King had made to me: "Muse is a ghost. In a real sense, writing comes as it comes. It really is like ghostwriting. It's

like it comes from someplace else. Maxwell Perkins, I think, said that Thomas Wolfe wasn't a writer, he was a divine wind chime. The wind blew through him and he just rattled. And I think that's true of a lot of writers. It's true of me."

Ghosts. What about ghosts, really?—a question I had, until that moment, been too sheepish to utter.

"I don't know how to answer it," King said. "But, if you insist, I guess the closest I can get is what Mike Noonan thinks when he's walking along the road at dusk and he says it looks like there are faces in the leaves and it feels like reality is thin and that the world is something that we skate on—it's like ice and we're always turning toward home. Just the act of turning . . . to me, when you skate, when you turn, there's this sort of giddy feeling of being in control and out of control at the same time, this real swoop like the corner on an amusement-park ride. Except that's clattery and noisy and defeats the whole sense of wonder, whereas ice skating is this quiet thing. I think the metaphor serves because reality is slippery. People slide on it and break their bones all the time. And if the ice is thin you can fall through." ♦

FICTION

THE PRICE OF RUM

Recollections of an honorable profession—San Juan, circa 1958.

BY HUNTER S. THOMPSON



IN the early fifties, when San Juan first became a tourist town, an ex-jockey named Al Arbonito built a bar in the patio behind his house on Calle O'Leary. He called it Al's Backyard and hung a sign above his doorway on the street, with an arrow pointing between two ramshackle buildings to the patio in back. At first he served nothing but beer, at twenty cents a bottle, and rum, at a dime a shot or fifteen cents with ice. After several months he began serving hamburgers, which he made himself.

It was a pleasant place to drink, especially in the mornings when the sun was still cool and the salt mist came up from the ocean to give the air a crisp, healthy smell that for a few early hours would hold its own against the steaming, sweaty heat that clamps San Juan at noon and remains until long after sundown.

As time passed, Al bought a new cash register and wood umbrella-tables for the patio, and finally moved his family out to a new *urbanización* near the airport. He hired a large Negro named Sweep, who washed the dishes and carried hamburgers and eventually learned to cook.

He turned his old living room into a

small piano bar, and got a pianist from Miami, a thin, sad-faced man called Nelson Otto. The piano was an old baby grand, painted light gray and covered with special shellac to keep the salt air from ruining the finish. At the tourist bureau they talk about the cooling trade winds that caress the shores of Puerto Rico every day and night of the year, but Nelson Otto was a man the trade winds never seemed to touch. Hour after muggy hour, through a tired repertoire of blues and sentimental ballads, the sweat dripped from his chin and soaked the armpits of his flowered cotton sports shirts. He cursed the "goddam shitting heat" with such violence and such hatred that it sometimes ruined the atmosphere of the place, and people would get up and walk down the street to the Flamboyán Lounge, where a bottle of beer cost sixty cents and a sirloin steak was three-fifty.

When an ex-Communist named Lotterman came down from Florida in 1955 to start the *San Juan Daily News*, Al's Backyard became the English-language press club, because none of the drifters and the dreamers who came to work for Lotterman's new paper could

afford the high-priced "New York" bars that were springing up all over the city like a rash of neon toadstools. The day-shift reporters and deskmen straggled in about seven, and the night-shift types—sports people, proofreaders, and makeup men—usually arrived en masse around midnight. Once in a while someone had a date, but on any normal night a girl in Al's Backyard was a rare and erotic sight. White girls were not plentiful in San Juan, and most of them were either tourists, hustlers, or airline stewardesses. It was not surprising that they preferred the casinos or the terrace bar at the Hilton.

All manner of men came to work for the *News*: from wild Young Turks who wanted to rip the world in half and start all over again to tired, beer-bellied old hacks who wanted nothing more than to live out their days in peace among a bunch of lunatics. There were loons and fugitives and dangerous drunks, a shoplifting Cuban who carried a gun in his armpit, a half-wit Mexican who molested small children, pimps and pederasts and human chancres of every description, most of them working just long enough to make the

COURTESY HIST COLLECTION; OPPOSITE: ©RALPH STEADMAN, FROM "GONZO: THE ART," HARDCOURT BRACE



"They were eerie days—those hot afternoons in San Juan when I was thirty years old and my shirt stuck damply to my back—and my fatalistic view was not so much a conviction as a necessity." Opposite: The author during his Caribbean period.

price of a few drinks and a plane ticket.

On the other hand, there were people like Tom Vandervitz, who later worked for the *Washington Post* and won a Pulitzer Prize. And a man named Tyrrell, now an editor of the *London Times*, who worked fifteen hours a day just to keep the paper from going under.

When I arrived, the *News* was three years old and Lotterman was on the verge of a breakdown. To hear him talk, you would think he'd been sitting at the very cross-corners of the earth, seeing himself as a combination of God, Pulitzer, and the Salvation Army. He often swore that if all the people who had worked for the paper in those years could appear at one time before the throne of the Almighty—if they all stood there and recited their histories and their quirks and their crimes and their deviations—God himself would tear his hair and fall down in a swoon.

In a sense I was one of them—more competent than some and more stable than others. Sometimes I worked for three newspapers at once. I wrote ad copy for new casinos and bowling alleys. I was a consultant for a cockfighting syndicate. I was an utterly corrupt high-end restaurant critic, a yachting photographer, and a routine victim of police brutality. It was a greedy life and I was good at it. I made some interesting friends, had enough money to get around, and learned a lot about the world that I could never have learned in any other way.

Like most of the others, I was a seeker, a mover, a malcontent, and at times a stu-

pid hell-raiser. I was never idle long enough to do much thinking, but I felt somehow that my instincts were right. I shared a vagrant optimism that some of us were making real progress, that we had taken an honest road, and that the best of us would inevitably make it over the top.

At the same time, I shared a dark suspicion that the life we were leading was a lost cause, that we were all actors, kidding ourselves along on a senseless odyssey. It was the tension between these two poles—a restless idealism on the one hand and a sense of impending doom on the other—that kept me going.

ONE Saturday in late March, when the tourist season was almost over and the merchants were bracing themselves for the muggy low-profit summer, Robert Sala, the *News*' photographer, had an assignment to go down to Fajardo, on the eastern tip of the island, and take some pictures of a new hotel that was going up on a hill overlooking the harbor.

I decided to go along for the ride. Ever since I'd come to San Juan I'd been meaning to get out on the island, but without a car it was impossible. My farthest penetration had been about twenty miles out, to Yeamon's place—Yeamon had worked for the *News* until Lotterman fired him—and Fajardo was twice as far in the same direction. We decided to get some rum and stop by Yeamon's on the way back, hoping to get there just as he paddled in from the reef with a bulging sack of lobsters. "He's probably damn good at it by

now," I said. "God knows what he's living on—they must have a steady diet of lobster and chicken."

"Hell," Sala remarked. "Chicken's expensive."

I laughed. "Not out there. He shoots them with a speargun."

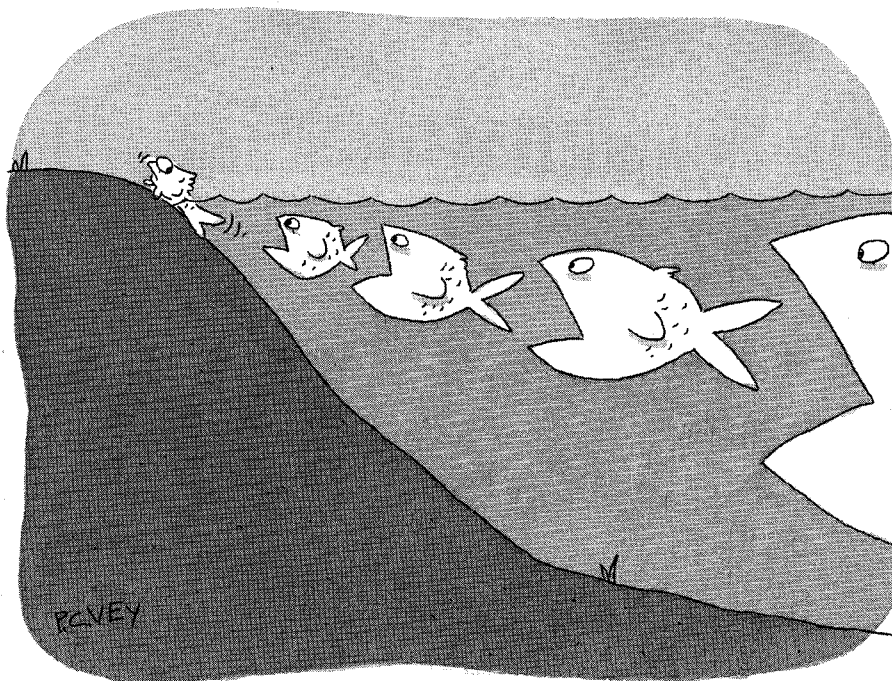
"God almighty!" Sala exclaimed. "That's voodoo country—they'll croak him, sure as hell!"

I shrugged. I'd assumed from the very beginning that Yeamon would be killed sooner or later—by somebody or some faceless mob, for some reason or other. There was a time I had been the same way. I wanted it all and I wanted it fast and no obstacle was big enough to put me off. Since then I had learned that some things were bigger than they looked from a distance, and now I was not so sure anymore just what I was going to get or even what I deserved. I was not proud of what I had learned but I never doubted it was worth knowing. Either Yeamon would learn the same things or he would certainly be croaked.

This is what I told myself on those hot afternoons in San Juan when I was thirty years old and my shirt stuck damply to my back and I felt myself on that big and lonely hump, with my hardnose years behind me and all the rest downhill. They were eerie days, and my fatalistic view of Yeamon was not so much conviction as necessity, because if I granted him even the slightest optimism I would have to admit a lot of unhappy things about myself.

We came to Fajardo after an hour's drive in the hot sun and immediately stopped for a drink at the first bar. Then we drove up a hill on the outskirts of town, where Sala puttered around for almost an hour, setting up his camera angles. He was a grudging perfectionist, no matter how much contempt he had for his assignment. As "the only pro on the island," he felt he had a certain reputation to uphold.

When he finished we bought two bottles of rum and a bag of ice. Then we drove back to the turnoff that would take us to Yeamon's beach house. The road was paved all the way to the Río Grande, where two natives operated a ferry. They charged us a dollar for the Fiat, then poled us across to the other side, not saying a word the whole time. I felt like a pilgrim crossing the Ganges, standing there in the sun beside the car and staring down at the water while the ferrymen



leaned on their poles and shoved us toward the palm grove on the other side. We bumped against the dock and they secured the barge to an upright log while Sala drove the car to solid ground.

We still had five miles of sand road before we got to Yeamon's place. Sala cursed the whole way, swearing he would turn back except that he'd be hit for another dollar to go back across the river. The little car thumped and bounced on the ruts and I thought it would come to pieces at any moment. Once we passed a pack of naked children stoning a dog beside the road. Sala stopped and took several pictures.

"Jesus," he muttered. "Look at those vicious little bastards! We'll be lucky to get out of here alive."

When we finally got to Yeamon's we found him on the patio, wearing his filthy black trunks and building a bookshelf out of driftwood. The place looked better now; part of the patio was covered with an awning made of palm fronds, and beneath it were two canvas deck chairs that looked like they belonged in one of the better beach clubs.

"Man," I said, "where did you get those?"

"Gypsies," he replied. "Five dollars apiece. I think they stole 'em in town."

"Where's Chenault?" Sala asked.

Yeamon pointed down at the beach. "Probably sunning herself down by that log. She puts on a show for the natives—they love her."

Sala brought the rum and the bag of ice from the car. Yeamon chuckled happily and poured the ice in a tub beside the door. "Thanks," he said. "This poverty is driving me nuts. We can't even afford ice."

"Man," I said, "you've bottomed out. You've got to get some work."

He laughed and filled three glasses with ice. "I'm still after Lotterman," he said. "It looks like I might get my money."

Just then Chenault came up from the beach, wearing a white bikini and carrying a big beach towel. She smiled at Yeamon: "They came again. I heard them talking."

"God damn it," Yeamon snapped. "Why do you keep going down there? What the hell is wrong with you?"

She smiled and sat down on the towel. "It's my favorite place. Why should I leave just because of them?"

Yeamon turned to me. "She goes down to the beach and takes off her clothes—

the natives hide back in the palms and watch her."

"Not always," Chenault said quickly. "Usually it's just on weekends."

Yeamon leaned forward and shouted at her. "Well, God damn you! Don't go down there anymore! From now on you stay up here if you want to lie around naked! I'll be God damned if I'll spend all my time worrying about you getting raped." He shook his head with disgust. "One of these days they'll get you, by God, and if you keep on teasing the poor bastards I'll damn well let them have you!"

She stared down at the concrete. I felt sorry for her and stood up to make her a drink. When I handed it to her she looked up gratefully and took a long swallow.

"Drink up," said Yeamon. "We'll invite some of your friends and have a real party!" Then he fell back in the chair. "Ah, the good life."

We sat there drinking for a while, Chenault saying nothing, Yeamon doing most of the talking, and finally he got up and picked a coconut off the sand beside the patio. "Come on," he said. "Let's have a little football."

I was glad for anything that would clear the air, so I put down my drink and ran awkwardly out for a pass. He spiraled it perfectly, but it smacked my fingers like lead and I dropped it.

"Let's get down on the beach," he called. "Plenty of room to run."

I nodded and waved to Sala. He shook his head. "Go play," he muttered. "Me and Chenault have serious things to discuss."

Chenault smiled halfheartedly and waved us down to the beach. "Go on," she said.

I slid down the bluff to the hard-packed sand on the beach. Yeamon threw up his arm and ran at an angle toward the surf. I tossed the nut high and long, watching it fall just beyond him in the water and make a quick splash. He fell on it and went under, bringing it up in his hands.

I turned and sprinted away, watching the nut float down at me out of the hot blue sky. It hurt my hands again, but this time I hung on. It was a good feeling to snag a long pass, even if it was a coconut. My hands grew red and tender, but I didn't mind. We ran short, over-the-middle passes and long floaters down the side-

lines, and after a while I couldn't help but think we were engaged in some kind of holy ritual, the reenactment of all our young Saturdays—expatriated now, lost and cut off from those games and those drunken stadiums, beyond the noise and blind to the false color of those happy spectacles. After years of jeering at football and all that football means, here I was on an empty Caribbean beach, running these silly pass patterns with all the zeal of a regular sandlot fanatic.

Finally I got too tired to run anymore and we went back up to the patio, where Sala and Chenault were still talking. They both seemed a little drunk, and after a few minutes of conversation I realized that Chenault was fairly out of her head. She kept chuckling to herself and mocking Yeamon's Southern accent.

We drank for another hour or so, laughing indulgently at Chenault and watching the sun slant off toward Jamaica and the Gulf of Mexico. It's still light in Mexico City, I thought. I had never been there and suddenly I was overcome by a tremendous curiosity about the place. Several hours of rum, combined with my mounting distaste for Puerto Rico, had me right on the verge of going into town, packing my clothes, and leaving on the first westbound plane. Why not? I thought. I hadn't cashed this week's paycheck yet; a few hundred in the bank, nothing to tie me down—why not, indeed? It was bound to be better than this place, where my only foothold was a cheap job that looked ready to collapse.

I turned to Sala. "How much is it from here to Mexico City?"

He shrugged and sipped his drink. "Too much," he replied. "Why? Are you moving on?"

I nodded. "I'm pondering it."

Chenault looked up at me, her face serious for a change. "You'd love Mexico City."

"What the hell do you know about it?" Yeamon snapped.

She glared up at him, then took a long drink from her glass.

"That's it," he said. "Keep sucking it down—you're not drunk enough yet."

"Shut up!" she screamed, jumping to her feet. "Leave me alone, you goddam pompous fool!"

His arm shot out so quickly that I barely saw the movement; there was the



sound of a smack as the back of his hand hit her cheek. It was almost a casual gesture, no anger, no effort, and by the time I realized what had happened he was leaning back in the chair again, watching impassively as she staggered back a few feet and burst into tears. No one spoke for a moment; then Yeamon told her to go inside. "Go on," he said. "Go to bed."

She stopped crying and took her hand away from her cheek. "Damn you," she sobbed.

"Get in there," he said.

She glared at him a moment longer, then turned and went inside. We could hear the squeak of springs as she fell on the bed, then the sobbing continued.

Yeamon stood up. "Well," he said quietly, "sorry to subject you people to that sort of thing." He nodded thoughtfully, glancing at the hut. "I think I'll go into town with you—anything happening tonight?"

Sala shrugged. I could tell he was upset. "Nothing," he said. "All I want is food, anyway."

Yeamon turned toward the door. "Hang on," he said. "I'll get dressed."

After he went inside, Sala turned to me and shook his head sadly. "He treats her like a slave," he whispered. "She'll crack up pretty soon."

I stared out to sea, watching the sun disappear.

We could hear him moving around inside, but there was no talk. When he came out he was dressed in his tan suit, with a tie flung loosely around his neck. He pulled the door shut and locked it from the outside. "Keep her from wandering around," he explained. "She'll probably pass out pretty soon anyway."

There was a sudden burst of sobbing from inside the hut. Yeamon gave a hopeless shrug and tossed his jacket in Sala's car. "I'll take the scooter," he said, "so I won't have to stay in town."

His scooter looked like one of those things they used to parachute behind the lines in the Second World War—a skeleton chassis, showing signs of a red paint job far gone with rust—and beneath the seat was a little engine that made a sound like a Gatling gun. There was no muffler, and the tires were completely bald.

We followed him along the road, nearly hitting him several times when he slid in the sand. He set a fast pace and

we were hard-pressed to keep up without tearing the car to pieces. As we passed the native shacks, little children came running out to the road to wave to us. Yeamon waved back, grinning broadly and giving a tall, straight-armed salute as he sped along, trailing a cloud of dust and noise.

We stopped where the paved road began, and Yeamon suggested we go to a place just a mile or so farther on. "Pretty good food and cheap drink," he said. "And, besides, they'll give me credit."

We followed him down the road until we came to a sign that said "Casa Cabrones." An arrow pointed to a dirt road that branched off toward the beach. It went through a grove of palms and ended in a small parking lot, next to a ratty restaurant with tables on the patio and a jukebox beside the bar. Except for the palms and the Puerto Rican clientele, it reminded me of a third-rate tavern in the American Midwest. A string of blue bulbs hung from two poles on either side of the patio, and every thirty seconds or so the sky above us was sliced by a yellow beam from the airport tower, no more than a mile away.

As we sat down and ordered our drinks I realized that we were the only gringos in the place. The others were locals. They made a great deal of noise, singing and shouting with the jukebox, but they all seemed tired and depressed. It was not the rhythmic sadness of Mexican music but the howling emptiness of a sound I have never heard anywhere but in Puerto Rico—a combination of groaning and whining, backed up by a dreary thumping and voices bogged down in despair.

Suddenly the music stopped and several men rushed for the jukebox. A quarrel broke out, a flurry of insults, and then, from somewhere far in the distance, like

a national anthem played to calm a frenzied crowd, came the slow tinkling of Brahms' Lullaby. The quarrel ceased, there was a moment of silence, several coins fell into the bowels of the jukebox, and then it broke into a whimpering yell. The men returned to the bar, laughing and slapping each other on the back.

We ordered three rums and the waiter brought them over. We'd decided to drink awhile, putting off dinner till later, and by the time we got around to ordering food the waiter told us the kitchen was closed.

"Never in hell!" Yeamon exclaimed.

"That sign says midnight." He pointed to a sign above the bar.

The waiter shook his head.

Sala looked up at him. "Please," he said. "I'm hungry."

The waiter shook his head again, staring at the green order pad in his hand.

Suddenly Yeamon banged his fist on the table. "Let's have some meat!" he shouted. "And more rum!"

The waiter looked fearful, then scurried behind the bar. Everyone in the place turned to look at us.

A fat little man wearing a white short-sleeved shirt came running out of the kitchen. He patted Yeamon on the shoulder. "Good fellows," he said with a nervous smile. "Good customers—no trouble, O.K.?"

Yeamon looked at him. "All we want is meat," he said pleasantly, "and another round of drinks."

The little man shook his head. "No dinner after ten," he said. "See?" He jabbed his finger at the clock. It was ten-twenty.

"That sign says midnight," Yeamon replied.

The man shook his head.

"What's the problem?" Sala asked. "The steaks won't take five minutes. Hell, forget the potatoes."

Yeamon held up his glass. "Let's get three drinks," he said, waving three fingers at the bartender.

The bartender looked at our man, who seemed to be the manager. He nodded quickly, then walked away. I thought the crisis had passed.

In a moment he was back, bringing a little green check that said \$11.50. He put it on the table in front of Yeamon.

"Don't worry about it," Yeamon told him.

The manager clapped his hands. "O.K.," he said angrily. "You pay." He held out his hand.

Yeamon brushed the check off the table. "I said don't worry about it."

The manager snatched the check off the floor. "You pay!" he screamed. "Pay now!"

Yeamon's face turned red and he rose half out of his chair. "I'll pay it like I paid the others!" he yelled. "Now get the hell away from here and bring us our goddam meat."

The manager hesitated, then leaped forward and slapped the check on the table. "Pay now!" he shouted. "Pay now and get out—or I call police."

He had barely got the words out



of his mouth when Yeamon grabbed him by the front of his shirt. "You cheap little bastard!" he snarled. "You keep yelling and you'll never get paid."

I watched the men at the bar. They were bug-eyed and tense as dogs. The bartender stood poised at the door, ready to either flee or run outside and get a machete—I wasn't sure.

The manager, out of control by this time, shook his fist at us and screeched, "Pay, you goddam Yankees! Pay and get out!"

Yeamon got up and put on his jacket. "Let's go," he said. "I'll deal with this bastard later."

The manager seemed terrified at the prospect of welshers walking out on him. He followed us into the parking lot, cursing and pleading by turns. "Pay now!" he howled. "When will you pay? You'll see, the police will come. . . . No police, just pay!"

I thought the man was crazy, and my only desire was to get him off our backs. "Christ," I said. "Let's pay it."

"Yeah," said Sala, bringing out his wallet. "This place is sick."

"Don't worry," said Yeamon. "He knows I'll pay." He tossed his jacket in the car, then turned to the manager. "You rotten little creep, get a grip on yourself."

We got in the car. As soon as Yeamon started his scooter the manager ran back and began shouting to the men inside the bar. His screams filled the air as we pulled off, following Yeamon out the long driveway. He refused to hurry, idling along like a man intrigued with the scenery, and in a matter of seconds two carloads of screaming Puerto Ricans were right behind us. I thought they might run us down. They were driving big American cars and could have squashed our little Fiat like a roach.

"Holy shit," Sala kept saying. "We're going to be killed."

When we came to the paved road, Yeamon pulled over and let us pass. We stopped a few yards ahead of him and the other cars came up beside him. Yeamon jumped off the scooter, letting it fall, and grabbed a man whose head was outside the window of one of the cars just as the police drove up. The Puerto Ricans cheered wildly and scrambled out of their cars. I was tempted to run, but we were instantly surrounded and both doors of the Fiat were jerked open and Sala and I



"I'm using my married name right now, but I'm keeping my maiden name on ice, just in case."

were pulled out. I tried to break loose. I could hear Yeamon saying, over and over, "Well, the man spit on me, the man spit on me . . ."

Suddenly everybody stopped shouting, and there was an argument between Yeamon, the manager, and a man who appeared to be the cop in charge.

"Look," Yeamon was saying. "I paid the other bills—what makes him think I won't pay this one?"

The manager said something about drunk, arrogant Yankees.

Before Yeamon could reply, one of the cops stepped up from behind him and slammed him on the shoulder with his billy. Yeamon lurched onto one of the Puerto Ricans who had come after us, and the man swung wildly with a beer bottle, hitting Yeamon in the ribs. I heard several swacks of bone against bone, and then, out of the corner of my eye, I saw something come at my head. I ducked just in time to take the main force of the blow on my back. It buckled my spine and I fell to the ground.

Sala was screaming and I was thrashing around, trying to avoid the feet that were pounding me like hammers. There was not much pain, but even through the numbness I knew they were hurting me, and I was suddenly sure I was going to die. I was still conscious, and the knowledge that I was being kicked to death in a Puerto Rican jungle for eleven dollars and fifty cents filled me with such terror that I began to scream like an animal.

Finally, just as I thought I was passing out, I felt myself being shoved into a car.

THE next six hours were spent in a tiny concrete cell with about twenty Puerto Ricans. We couldn't sit down because they had pissed all over the floor, so we stood in the middle of the room, giving out cigarettes like representatives of the Red Cross. They were a dangerous-looking lot. Some were drunk and others seemed crazy. I felt safe as long as we could supply them with cigarettes, but I wondered what would happen when we ran out.

It seemed like we had been there for six years when the guard finally opened the door and beckoned us out. Sala could hardly walk and Yeamon and I were so tired that we had trouble supporting him. I had no idea where we were going. This is the way people disappear, I thought. We went back through the building, along several hallways, and finally into a large courtroom. As we were shoved through the door, looking as dirty and dishevelled as the most horrible bums in the cell we had just left, I looked around anxiously for some familiar face.

The courtroom was jammed and I looked for several minutes before I saw Moberg and Sanderson standing solemnly in one corner. Moberg was a *News* reporter. Sanderson worked for Adelante, the firm hired by the government to tidy up its image in the States. I nodded to them and Moberg held up

his thumb and forefinger in a circle.

"Thank God," said Sala. "We've made contact."

"Is that Sanderson?" Yeamon asked.

"Looks like it," I said, not having the faintest idea what it meant.

"What's that prick doing here?" Sala mumbled.

"We could do a hell of a lot worse," I said. "We're damn lucky anybody's here."

It was almost an hour before they called our case. The boss cop was the first to speak, and his testimony was delivered in Spanish. Sala, who understood parts of what he was saying, kept muttering, "That lying bastard. . . . Claims we threatened to tear the place up, attacked the manager, ran out on our bill, hit a cop, Christ Jesus! . . . Started a fight when we got to headquarters. God, this is too much! We're done for!"

When the boss cop had finished, Yeamon asked for a translation of the testimony, but the judge ignored him.

The manager testified next, sweating and gesturing with excitement, his voice rising to a hysterical pitch as he swung his arms and shook his fists and pointed at us as if we had killed his entire family.

We understood nothing of what he said, but it was obvious that things were going against us. When it finally came our turn to speak, Yeamon got up and demanded a translation of all the testimony against us.

"You heard it," said the judge in perfect English.

Yeamon explained that none of us spoke Spanish well enough to understand what had been said. "These people spoke English before," he said, pointing at the cop and the manager. "Why can't they speak it now?"

The judge smiled contemptuously. "You forget where you are," he said. "What right do you have to come here and cause trouble, and then tell us to speak your language?"

I could see that Yeamon was losing his temper and I motioned to Sanderson to do something. Just then I heard Yeamon say he "would expect fairer treatment under Batista."

A dead silence fell on the courtroom. The judge stared at Yeamon, his eyes bright with anger. I could almost feel the axe descending.

Sanderson called from the back of the room, "Your Honor, could I have a word?"

The judge looked up. "Who are you?"

"My name is Sanderson. I'm with Adelante."

A man I had never seen stepped quickly up to the judge and whispered in his ear. The judge nodded, then looked back at Sanderson. "Go ahead," he said.

Sanderson's voice seemed out of place after the wild denunciations of the cop and the manager. "These men are American journalists," he said. "One is with the *New York Times*, one represents the American Travel Writers' Association, and one works for *Life* magazine." He paused, and I wondered just how much good this kind of thing was going to do.

"Perhaps I'm wrong," Sanderson continued, "but I think this testimony has been a little confusing, and I'd hate to see it result in any unnecessary embarrassment." He glanced at the boss cop, then back to the judge.

"Jesus," Yeamon whispered. "I hope he knows what he's doing."

I nodded, watching the judge's face. Sanderson's last comment had been delivered in a tone of definite warning, and it crossed my mind that he might be drunk. For all I knew, he had come straight from some party where he'd been drinking steadily since early afternoon.

"Well, Mr. Sanderson," said the judge, in an even voice. "What do you suggest?"

Sanderson smiled politely. "I think it might be wise to continue this hearing when the atmosphere is a little less strained."

The same man who had spoken to the judge earlier was back at the bench. There was a quick exchange of words; then the judge spoke to Sanderson.

"You have a point," he said, "but these men have behaved in an arrogant way—they have no respect for our laws."

Sanderson's face darkened. "Well, Your Honor, if the case is going to be tried tonight, I'll have to ask for a recess until I can contact Adolfo Quinones." The judge nodded. Quinones was the *News'* attorney, an ex-senator, and one of the most prominent men on the island. "I'll have to wake him up," Sanderson continued, "and get Señor Quinones out of bed, but I don't feel qualified to act any further as an attorney."

There was another hurried conference at the bench. The name Quinones, I could see, had given the court some pause.

It was almost dawn before we were released on bail, and the sky was a light gray. Except for the people around the police station, the streets were calm and

empty. A few big freighters stood at anchor in the bay, waiting for morning and the tugboats that would bring them in. By the time we got to the street, I could see the first rays of the sun, a cool pink glow in the eastern sky. The fact that I'd spent all night in a cell and a courtroom made that morning one of the most beautiful I've ever seen. There was a peace and a brightness about it, a chilly Caribbean dawn after a night in a filthy jail. I looked out at the ships and the sea beyond them, and I felt crazy to be free with a whole day ahead of me.

After only a few hours of sleep, I was awakened by a great shout. It was Sala, sprung up as if from a nightmare. "Mother of balls!" he yelled. "The car! The vultures!"

After a moment of confusion I remembered that we had left his car on the road near Casa Cabrones. The Puerto Ricans take a real interest in abandoned cars—they set upon them like hungry animals and tear them apart. First go the hubcaps, then the wheels, then the bumpers and doors, and finally they haul away the carcass—twenty or thirty of them, like ants dragging a dead beetle, hauling it off to some junk dealer for ten yanqui dollars, then fighting with knives and broken bottles for shares of the money.

Yeamon woke up slowly, groaning with pain. Around his mouth was a crust of dried blood. He sat up on the mattress and stared at us.

"Wake up," I said. "Your scooter's out there, too."

Sala swung his legs over the edge of the cot. "It's too late. They've had twenty-four hours—Christ, they can strip a car in twenty-four minutes. We'll be lucky to find an oil spot."

"Gone?" said Yeamon. He was still staring at us, not quite awake.

I nodded. "Probably."

Reluctantly, I began to dress. There were bruises all over my body and it was painful to move.

We walked to the Plaza Colón and got a cab. I had never seen the city on a Sunday morning. Usually I got up about noon and went to Al's for a long breakfast. Now the streets were almost empty. There was no sign of the weekday chaos, the screech and roar of an army of salesmen careering through town in uninsured cars. The waterfront was nearly deserted, the stores were closed, and only the churches seemed to be doing any business. We passed several of them, and in front of each one was a colorful knot of people—tan-skinned

DESCENT INTO THE MAELSTROM

SIX HOURS IN THE CAR WITH...

DAD

MOM

TIMMY

JUDY

HOUR ONE

JUDY: I'm hungry.

MOM: How can you be hungry?
We just left the house.

TIMMY: I'm cold.

DAD: You're not cold. It's 90°
outside.

JUDY: Are we there yet?

HOUR TWO

DAD: Whoever sees an animal
first gets 50¢.

JUDY: Look! There's a bug on the
windshield! I get 50¢!

TIMMY: That's not an animal,
that's an insect, you dork.

JUDY: Insects ARE animals, jerk.

TIMMY: But that doesn't mean
they COUNT.

JUDY: Dad? Do insects count?

MOM: Why don't we all enjoy
this beautiful scenery?

HOUR THREE

TIMMY: Leave me alone.

JUDY: What am I DOING???

TIMMY: Your foot just touched
my foot.

MOM: You guys are not allowed
to look at each other, speak
to each other, or touch each
other. IS THAT CLEAR???

TIMMY: (something under breath).

JUDY: MOM!!!!

HOUR FOUR

DAD: IF THERE IS ANY
MORE NONSENSE FROM
BACK THERE, I WILL
PULL OVER AND SPANK
YOU BOTH TILL YOU SEE
STARS! SO HELP ME
GOD!! THE END!!!!

MOM: Look at that old barn
over there.

HOUR FIVE

TIMMY: Guess what? We haven't
had our seat belts on
this whole time!

MOM AND DAD: PUT YOUR
SEAT BELTS ON
RIGHT THIS MINUTE!

HOUR SIX

TIMMY: Let's play Smashies.

JUDY: What's Smashies?

TIMMY: It's when you put your
hand on top of the cooler
and I try to smash it.

JUDY: Like this?

TIMMY: (SMASH).

JUDY: OW! That hurt!

TIMMY: Wanna play Pinchies?

MOM: Does anybody want some grapes?

men and boys in freshly pressed suits, flowery women with veils, little girls in white dresses, and here and there a priest in a black robe and a tall black hat.

We sped across the long causeway to Condado. Things were different here. There were no churches and the sidewalks were full of tourists in sandals and bright Bermuda shorts. They streamed in and out of the big hotels, chattering, reading papers, carrying satchels, all wearing sunglasses and looking very busy.

Yeamon mopped his face with a handkerchief. "Man," he said. "I don't think I can stand to lose this scooter. Jesus—fired, beaten, arrested."

I nodded and Sala said nothing. He was leaning over the driver's shoulder, as if he expected at any moment to catch sight of a mob dismantling his car.

After what seemed like hours we turned off the airport road and onto the narrow lane to Casa Cabrones. We were still several hundred yards away when I saw Sala's car. "There it is," I said, pointing up the road.

"Christ," he muttered. "A miracle."

As we pulled up to it I realized it was sitting on two coconut logs, instead of its wheels. They were gone, and so was Yeamon's scooter.

Sala took it calmly. "Well—better than I thought." He got into the car and checked around. "Nothing gone but the wheels—damn lucky."

Yeamon was in a rage. "I'll recognize that thing!" he shouted. "One of these days I'll catch somebody riding it."

I was sure we were due for more trouble if we hung around Casa Cabrones. I walked a few hundred feet toward the bar, looking to see if anyone was coming. It was closed and the parking lot was empty.

On the way back to the car, I saw something red in the bushes beside the driveway. It was Yeamon's scooter, covered with a layer of palm fronds. Someone had hidden it, intending to pick it up later.

I called him and he dragged it out. Nothing was missing. He kicked it over and it started perfectly. "Damn," he said. "I should sit here and wait for that punk to come back for it—give him a little surprise."

"Sure," I said. "Then spend the summer in La Princesa. Come on—let's get out of here."

Back at the car, Sala was figuring up the cost of four new tires and wheels. He looked very depressed.

"Let's get some breakfast," said Yeamon. "I've got to have food."

"Are you nuts?" Sala replied. "I can't leave this car—they'll finish it off." He reached into his wallet. "Here," he said to Yeamon. "Go down to that gas station and call the Fiat dealer and tell him to send four wheels. Here's his home phone—tell him it's for Mr. Lotterman."

Yeamon took the card and clattered off down the road. In a few minutes we heard him coming back. Then we sat for an hour until the wrecker arrived. To my surprise, the man had sent four wheels. We put them on, Sala signed Lotterman's name to a ticket, and then we drove in to the Long Beach Hotel for breakfast.

The patio was crowded, so we sat inside at the snack bar. All around us were people I had spent ten years avoiding—shapeless women in wool bathing suits, dull-eyed men with hairless legs and self-conscious laughs, all Americans, all fearfully alike. These people should be kept at home, I thought; lock them in the basement of some goddam Elks Club and keep them pacified with erotic movies; if they want a vacation, show them a foreign art film; and if they still aren't satisfied send them into the wilderness and run them with vicious dogs.

I glared at them, trying to eat the rotten breakfast the waitress had put in front of me—slimy eggs, fat bacon, and weak American coffee.

"God damn it," I said. "This isn't Nedick's—don't you have Puerto Rican coffee?"

She shook her head.

Sala went out and bought a Miami *Herald*. "I like this place," he said with a grin. "I like to sit up here and look down at the beach and think of all the good things I could do with a Luger."

I put two dollars on the table and got up.

"Where are you going?" Yeamon asked, looking up from a part of the paper he had taken from Sala.

"I don't know," I said. And I didn't know. I didn't even have my own apartment. "Probably Sanderson's. Anyplace where I can get away from these people."

Several blocks up the street I stopped at an outdoor restaurant for some Puerto Rican coffee. I bought a New York *Times* for seventy cents. I had another cup of coffee and took the *Times* with me when I left, lugging it along the street like a

precious bundle of wisdom, a weighty assurance that I was not yet cut off from that part of the world that was real.

It took me half an hour to get to Sanderson's, but the walk was along the beach and I enjoyed it. When I got there I found him stretched out in his garden on a plastic sun pad. He looked thinner than he did when he was dressed.

"Hello, slugger," he said. "How was jail?"

"Horrible," I said.

"Well," he replied, "next time it will be worse. You will be a marked man."

I leaned back in the chair, looking out at the white beach and the sea and the palms all around us, and thinking how strange it was to be worried about jail in a place like this. It seemed almost impossible that a man could go to the Caribbean and be put in jail for some silly misdemeanor. Puerto Rican jails were for Puerto Ricans—not Americans who wore paisley ties and button-down shirts.

"You're lucky," he continued. "You can get a year in jail for resisting arrest."

"Well," I said, trying to change the subject, "I think your speech saved the day. They weren't very impressed by the fact that we worked for the *News*."

He lit another cigarette. "No, that wouldn't impress anybody." He looked up again. "But don't think I lied for you. The *Times* is looking for a travel stringer down here and they asked me to find somebody. As of tomorrow, you're it."

I shrugged. "Fine."

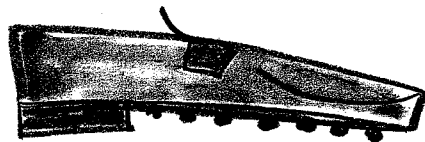
I went inside for another drink. While I was in the kitchen I heard a car drive up. It was Nick Segarra, a *News* editor, dressed like some gigolo on the Italian Riviera. He nodded stiffly as he came through the door.

"So what was all the trouble last night?"

"I don't remember," I said, pouring my drink down the sink. "Get Sanderson to tell you. I have to go."

I left and walked out to Calle Modesto, wondering how to kill the rest of the day. It was always a problem. Sunday was my day off and usually I had Saturday, too. But I was getting tired of riding around with Sala or sitting at Al's, and there was nothing else to do. I wanted to get out on the island, look at some of the other towns, but for that I needed a car.

Not just a car, I thought; I need an apartment, too. It was a hot afternoon and I was tired and sore. I wanted to sleep, or at least rest, but there was no place to go. I walked for several blocks, ambling along in the shade of the big *flamboyán* trees,



thinking of all the things I might be doing in New York or London, cursing the warped impulse that had brought me to this dull and steaming rock, and finally I stopped at a native bar to get a beer. I paid for the bottle and took it with me, sipping it as I walked along the street. I wondered where I could sleep. Sala's apartment was out of the question. It was hot and noisy and depressing as a tomb. Maybe Yeamon's, I thought, but it was too far out and there was no way to get there. When I finally faced the fact that I had no choice but to walk the streets, I decided to start looking for my own apartment—a place where I could relax by myself and have my own refrigerator and make my own drinks and maybe even take a girl once in a while. The idea of having my own bed in my own apartment cheered me so much that I felt anxious to be rid of this day and get on to the next, so I could begin looking.

I realized that to tie myself down with an apartment and perhaps a car was more of a commitment than I wanted to make right now—especially since I might be hauled off to jail at any moment, or the paper might fold, or I might get a letter from some old friend about a job in Buenos Aires. Just yesterday, for that matter, I'd been ready to go to Mexico City.

I walked for more than a mile, thinking, smoking, sweating, peering over tall hedges and into low windows, listening to the roar of the buses and the crowded autos heading for God knows where—whole families jammed in cars, just driving around the city, honking, yelling, stopping now and then to buy *pastelillos* and a shot of *coco frío*, then getting back in the car and moving on, marvelling at all the fine things the yanquis were doing to the city: here was an office building going up, ten stories tall; here was a new highway, leading nowhere; and of course there were always the new hotels to look at; or you could watch the yanqui women on the beach; and at night, if you arrived early enough to get a good seat, there was *televisión* in the public squares.

I kept walking, more frustrated with every step. Finally, in desperation, I hailed a cab and went to the Caribe Hilton, where they were staging an international tennis tournament. I used my press card to get in and sat in the stands the rest of the afternoon.

The sun didn't bother me here. It seemed to belong with the clay courts and the gin and the white ball zipping back and forth. I remembered other tennis courts

and long-gone days full of sun and gin and people I would never see again because we could no longer talk to each other without sounding dull and disappointed.

The match was over at dusk and I took a cab up to Al's. Sala was there, sitting alone at a corner table. I saw Sweep on the way to the patio and told him to bring two rums and three hamburgers. Sala looked up as I approached.

"You have that fugitive look," he said. "A man on the run."

"Where's Yeamon?" I asked.

"He went home," he replied. "Right after you left he remembered Chenault was still locked in the hut."

Sweep arrived with our drinks and food and I took them off the tray.

"I think he's crazy as a loon," Sala exclaimed.

"You're right," I replied. "God knows how he'll end up. You can't just go through life like that—never giving an inch, anytime, anywhere."

Just then Bill Donovan, the sports editor, came howling up to the table.

"Here they are!" he shouted. "The gentlemen of the press—sneak drinkers!" He laughed happily. "You fuckers really tied one on last night, eh? Man, you're lucky Lotterman went to Poncel!" He sat down at the table. "What happened? I hear you had it out with the cops."

"Yeah," I said. "Beat the piss out of 'em—real laughs."

"God damn it," he said. "Sorry I missed it. I love a good fight—especially with cops."

I liked Donovan, but he was forever talking about getting back to San Francisco, "where things are happening." He made it sound so good on the Coast that I knew he had to be lying, but I could never tell just where the truth ended and the lies began. If even half of what he said was true, then I wanted to go there immediately; but with Donovan I couldn't even count on that necessary half.

We left about midnight and walked down the hill in silence. The night was muggy, and all around me I felt the same pressure, a sense of time rushing by while it seemed to be standing still. Whenever I thought of time in Puerto Rico, I was reminded of those old magnetic clocks that hung on the walls of my classrooms in high school. Every now and then a hand would not move for several minutes—and if I watched it, wondering if it had finally broken down, the sudden click of the hand jumping three or four notches always startled me when it came. ♦

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SPEAKING SHAKESPEARE

Off Flatbush Avenue, an Elizabethan workshop for the stars.

BY JOHN LAHR

ONE day this spring, John Barton, the director, playwright, and Shakespeare swami, looked up from his notes to discover that the actors in his workshop had assembled in their seats in an attic rehearsal room at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Barton, who has a princely knowledge of literature but is hardly "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," went over to greet the actor Tony Randall, who sat natty as a jaybird in a blue blazer and pink shirt in the second row. Barton, with his unbuttoned shirt cuffs drooping down off his wrists, towered above Randall like a scarecrow. "We're going to put you through your paces today," he said. Randall rumbled in reply, apologizing for his "morning voice." Barton, a reticent man, cranked up a big smile of uneven teeth. "Creeping like snail unwillingly to school," he teased, quoting Jaques's soliloquy from "As You Like It," which was Randall's homework assignment for the day. Randall was one of twenty-two selected actors with a Shakespeare pedigree—including Kevin Kline, Helen Hunt, Sam Waterston, Ruben Santiago-Hudson, Kate Burton, and Stephen Spinella—who had roused themselves from their beds in the untheatrical early hours of the morning and trudged to Flatbush Avenue, where, over three three-day weekends of eight-hour sessions, Barton was giving a workshop in what might be called Shakespeare's word chemistry.

Barton, who is sixty-nine and who was enlisted by Peter Hall when he founded the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1960, doesn't exactly lecture, and he doesn't exactly teach acting, and he doesn't exactly interpret the text. What he does is offer the actors a practical method for understanding the acting clues that are buried within the text—a kind of Shakespearean map-

reading technique. His message to the group seated in a semicircle around him on the first day is more or less the same as Hamlet's directions to the players in the sketch he stages at court. "Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounce'd it to you, trippingly on the tongue," Hamlet tells them, delivering one of Shakespeare's few public pronouncements on stagecraft. "Suit the action to the word, the word to the action." As Barton explains to the actors assembled, "The Elizabethan way is to put it all into the words and the words only." Shakespeare, who had a vocabulary of twenty-five thousand words (our core vocabulary is only fifteen thousand) was writing for a primarily verbal culture. A company of Elizabethan actors—who, records show, performed as many as forty plays a season—must have been able "to tune in much more quickly and easily to a text than people today," Barton says. "They must have picked up and seen acting clues in the text." By scrutinizing a text—its syntax, its verse forms, even its minimal punctuation—he shows the actor how to recognize those clues and how to exploit them, bringing vividness and variety to a role.

"The character is the text," he says, quoting the R.S.C.'s current artistic director, Adrian Noble. Barton mischievously reminds the actors that to the Elizabethans the word "character" meant only a letter in the alphabet. The modern concepts of "character," "relationship," and "intention" didn't evolve until centuries after Shakespeare wrote the plays. "Digging into 'character relationships' would have been alien to the Elizabethan actor," he tells them, adding that "you can go a long way without talking about character at all." He explains, "The 'character's journey' suggests a through line that makes sense. But Shakespeare sets up expectations

that he continually contradicts. So when an actor looks for a 'character's journey,' I know he'll get lost." His modest proposal to actors is that if they learn to properly mine what's in the words and speak them, the character will emerge of itself.

WHEN he's on the prowl for swallowed end lines, dodged rhymes, the wash of lyricism, or the false fluency he so dislikes, Barton pads about in his socks; his shoes, in any case, have been so worn down at the back that they're essentially leather slippers. He usually lurks on the periphery of the room, poised and tilted forward like a bird dog on the scent. The effect of his frequent interruptions is a kind of dramatic brass rubbing, where the definition of the performance is heightened with each pass. Barton leaped up after Kevin Kline's first attempt at the Prologue to "Henry V," which sets the scene of battle between the English and the French, to call attention to Shakespeare's comments on dramaturgy:

And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
On your imaginary forces work.

"He invites the audience to work," Barton said.

"In today's entertainment we're rarely asked to work," Kline said, then went into comic mode. "You're going to have to *use* your imagination." He paused and reflected: "The speech is about war. It's pretty ugly. I suddenly heard 'famine,' 'sword,' 'fire.' They're usually not exciting."

"Spot on," Barton told him. "Let's look at it again. Let's look at the contradictions." Early in the sessions, Barton introduces the term "antithesis" to describe Shakespeare's dynamic, ever-changing play with contradictions in language and in his characters' minds. Out of these contradictions, a play's argument emerges. "It's vital to look for the argument," Barton told the group. "If you don't think, communicate, play with the antitheses, a great deal of Shakespeare becomes difficult to follow. If you do go with it, he's much easier to follow and enjoy. The trap is that if you look for the emotional truth you may not find the argument, but if you find the argument you may find the character." Shakespeare's dramaturgy, Barton says, is built on "jagged contradiction and the

confounding of surprise." Much of his workshop is spent analyzing the progression of the contradictions in the characters' speeches and emphasizing the "gear changes" that move them forward to their resolution. In approaching passages like the Prologue, Barton ad-

words, made a vivid picture. He seemed to find the instructions in the words themselves, with the lines "Think, when we *talk* of horses, that you *see* them / Printing their proud hoofs i' th' receiving earth."

"Am I making too much of a meal of it?" Kline asked afterward. Bar-

they are saying every word. They will kind of read a passage and go, 'He seems to be angry about something here.' Yeah, but why does he choose that word, what does that antithesis mean? They don't *use* the language. The language is something they have



John Barton, an old hand, guides actors back to the pleasures of the text. Photograph by Anthony Barboza.

vises the actors, "Look out for the antitheses and play them." Or, as Shakespeare writes in "Richard II," "Set the word itself / Against the word."

Barton reminded Kline of this as they continued to discuss the text. "Set the word against the word," he said, venturing a few lines: "Can this cockpit hold / The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram / Within this wooden O the very casques / That did affright the air at Agincourt?" His emphases spurred Kline, on his next pass, to stress the graphic contradiction between the cramped theatre and the vast fields, so that each phrase, as Kline hit the key

ton didn't think so. "If it's done genuinely. Where it's coined in the moment, you can't make too much of the moment." He paused. "Something which was descriptive on your first try became active and dynamic. It's the difference between a snapshot and a moving picture."

Later, as we rode back into the city, Kline told me, "I don't think I knew until John pointed it out how important antitheses were, not only as a rhetorical device you can't ignore but how you can harness it. American actors will generalize. They don't understand that they have to know why

to get through so they can get to the acting part."

BARTON is himself an exemplar of the Elizabethan ideal he admires, a rare mixture of vigorous thought and action. He sometimes totters a bit on his right leg because of an injury sustained long ago in a staged sword fight, and for three years in the fifties he was the lay dean of King's College, Cambridge. While he says that the label of scholar "always deeply embarrasses me and infuriates my wife, who *is* a scholar" (Anne Barton is a professor of English at Trinity College, Cambridge), he has by his

count adapted about twenty plays for the R.S.C. over the decades. He wrote the linking blank verse that turned Shakespeare's Henry VI plays into one saga, "The Wars of the Roses," which he co-directed and which became the defining production of the R.S.C. in the sixties—an examination of kingship in the age of Kennedy. "The Hollow Crown," his study of the changes in the English monarchy and in the English language over the centuries, which he adapted for the stage, directed, and performed in, proved a huge R.S.C. success in the sixties and seventies. Over the past decade, he has completed nine of ten plays collectively called "Tantalus," a retelling of the story of Troy, which Peter Hall is keen to direct and which Barton undertook "as an attempt to break through a thirty-five-year block as a writer." Although some fifteen years have passed since Barton last directed a Shakespeare production in England, he has been dispensing his practical understanding of Shakespeare in workshops around the world for nearly two decades; in 1983, Britain's Channel 4 produced "Playing Shakespeare," a fascinating nine-part series of Barton wrestling the "textual juices" out of a handful of famous English actors. He has directed many of Britain's outstanding talents (Dame Judi Dench, Helen Mirren, Sir Ian McKellen, Alan Rickman, Ian Holm, Peter O'Toole, the late Sir Michael Hordern) and is much loved by them for both his unjudgmental astuteness and what the producer Michael Kustow calls "his slapstick element." "He was giving a company notes onstage while smoking and leaning back on his chair," recalls Kustow, who worked at the R.S.C. in Barton's heyday and is producing his "Tantalus" plays. "He tipped backwards into the front stalls. They couldn't see him anywhere, but the voice was still coming up from the stalls. The notes went on."

In an age when most directors take a broad, high-concept approach to Shakespeare, Barton is going in the opposite direction by forcing modern actors to engage more deeply with the text. The BAM workshop, co-funded by the National Actors Theatre, is a kind of Shakespeare summer camp, where actors can play without pressure. "It's like messing

around in boats," Sam Waterston says. "It's messing around in Shakespeare." Kline, who has done a number of Shakespeare productions, including a memorable "Henry V" in the Park, and has attended many of Barton's workshops, comments, "What I find sad is that there are not more directors here. The directors should be in this workshop. Most directors of Shakespeare in this country don't



know about the text. In fact, they don't direct off the text. They think visually." Barton observes that Shakespeare these days is often purveyed by the "would-be conceptual director who thinks he has a mighty concept and doesn't actually do the play." He explains, "He does an adaptation or paraphrase and puts himself in the hands of a designer, who puts sets on top of actors, so the actors are subdued and distorted by set and costume. The actor doesn't care a fuck about Shakespeare. The director doesn't care a fuck about Shakespeare. He never really encounters Shakespeare." Barton's workshops are a kind of rear-guard action meant to bring about that missing encounter between the player and the playwright. Elizabethan actors had no director; they also had very little rehearsal time. And Barton, whose process is to marry the Elizabethan and the modern traditions, wants to place the storytelling responsibility where the Elizabethans placed it—with the actors.

"TASTE it, feel it, smell it, get comfortable in it," Barton continually exhorted the group about the rich impasto of Shakespeare's English. "The Elizabethans would have delighted in this, which is difficult for us today. There's a tendency in our acting tradition to run away from verbal relish. It's that gap in particular I'm trying to fill." To illustrate the power of Shakespeare's language to stimulate the imagination, Barton chose the moment in "King Lear" when Edgar pretends to his blind father that they are on a cliff peering down at the sea. Here one character, who is "acting" for another character, creates the verbal magic that Shakespearean actors must work on the audience itself. Barton made the actors shut their eyes. "I want you to listen and not watch," he said, as the soft-spoken Ste-

phen Spinella tried out Edgar's speech:

The fishermen that walk upon the beach
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring
bark,
Diminish'd to her cock; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring
surge,
That on th'unnumb'ed idle pebble chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.

"Did you feel you could picture it?" Barton asked the others; they couldn't. Spinella attempted the passage again, with only partial success. "You're seeing something a long way away," Barton said. "You've got to create a sense of space." He was equally incisive when Peter Francis James began Claudio's meditation on death in "Measure for Measure": "Ay, but to die, and go we know not where." Barton stopped him and took him through the progression of Claudio's images: frozen in ice, blown by the winds. He added, "He says 'we know not where.' Everybody tends to play the scene as if they know exactly where they're going."

Barton asks the actor to be vigilant both about the content of the words and the style they're couched in: "When Shakespeare shifts from a naturalistic to a poetic line, I believe something very important is happening. The actor has to ask himself why." For instance, in "Twelfth Night" the haughty Olivia falls for Viola, disguised as a man—at which point she abandons prose for verse ("Your lord does know my mind, I cannot love him, / Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble"). "When she falls in love, then she starts to go with it," Barton told Helen Hunt, who was working on the part. Frequently, he asks the actors to ask themselves why their characters use so many words and why the punctuation falls as it does. He and Ruben Santiago-Hudson discussed Brutus's assassination soliloquy from "Julius Caesar," which begins:

It must be by his death; and for my part,
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general. He would be crown'd:
How that might change his nature, there's
the question.
It is the bright day that brings forth the
adder,
And that craves wary walking. Crown
him that,
And then I grant we put a sting in him
That at his will he may do danger with.

"The sentences keep starting in the middle of the verse—it's a big acting

clue," Barton said. "It's quick thought. His mind is buzzing. A choice is posed about character." Here Barton paused also to dispute the punctuation of a line. "The verse and the grammatical full stops don't go together. 'Crown him that' I think should be a question," he said. "A question involves us and makes it necessary to go on." One of Barton's most often repeated maxims is "With Shakespeare, always play the question." The question "passes the ball to the audience." For instance, in Henry's meditation on kingship in "Henry V":

And what have kings, that privates have
not too,
Save ceremony, save general ceremony?
And what art thou, thou idol Ceremony?

Barton detects Shakespeare's theatrical intentions even from short verse lines. He demonstrated the point in a terse scene from "King John," where the King speaks to his accomplice Hubert about the killing of the boy Arthur:

KING: Death.
HUBERT: My lord?
KING: A grave.
HUBERT: He shall not live.
KING: Enough.

"A short verse line suggests a pause, and this kind of shared verse line says, 'Pick up the cue,'" he explains.

In all of these examples, Barton was clarifying a distinction between what's poetic on the page and poetic on the stage. He dislikes using the word "poetry" in the rehearsal process "because it's a generalized word." He also dislikes the term "iambic pentameter"—a "horrible phrase," which was alien to the Elizabethan actor—as a description of the alternation of light and strong stresses in the blank verse. Shakespeare's blank verse serves as an actor's help; it gives him both phrasing and momentum. But poetry, as Barton points out, "doesn't necessarily have anything to do with verse." Barton's intent is to help the actors achieve a balance in their playing between naturalistic and heightened language, to free performance from both the deadliness of the vaguely poetic and the naturalistic ex-

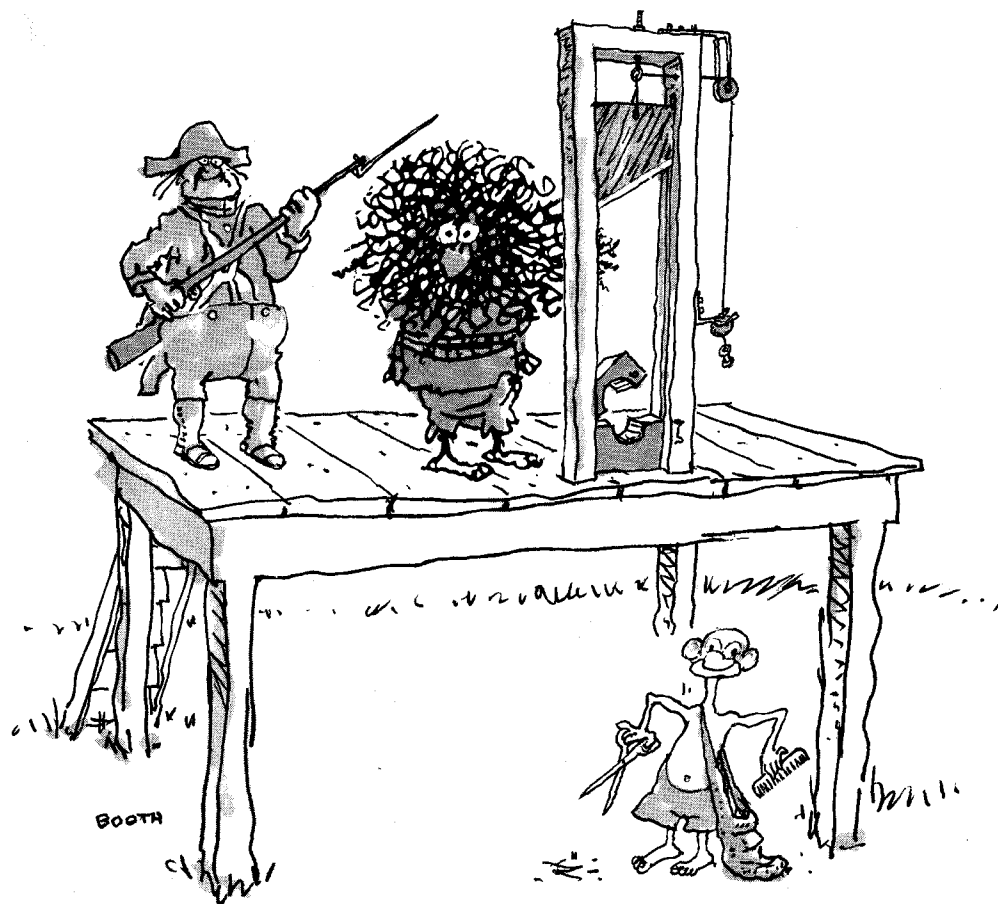
treme personified in what he calls "the Al Pacino Fallacy," where, as he puts it, "you get the juices *between* the words rather than *in* the words." In Pacino's "Richard III," according to Barton, there are as many as five pauses to the line. "You actually can't get the machine off the ground," he says. "Pacino breaks up every line, so you lose your way—you lose wit, you lose the thought. It's like a gramophone playing at half speed."

In examining the proper balance between heightened and naturalistic language, Barton continually reminds the actors of a paradox: "The most moving tends to be the simplest and monosyllabic." Among the many instances of Shakespeare's monosyllabic power that Barton cited was King Lear's reunion with Cordelia. "This was my first dim memory of Shakespeare," he said. "I remember reading this line and first getting interested in Shakespeare." In the scene, Cordelia asks "Sir, do you know me?" and a few lines later Lear asks, "Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?" "It's like Tamburlaine waking up in a Beckett world," Barton muses, cautioning the actor not to milk it or try too hard. Later in the scene, Lear

says, "I know you do not love me, for your sisters / Have (as I do remember) done me wrong: / You have some cause, they have not." To which Cordelia replies, "No cause, no cause."

"The monosyllables compress human feeling and meaning," Barton says. "Cordelia speaks so simply, but somehow 'no cause, no cause' is more moving than something very metaphorical and polysyllabic. It's moving because of its reticence." He adds, "Isn't that a poetic scene without being a 'poetic' scene in the normal currency we tend to use?"

ONE day while the group was rehearsing the banishment scene in "Richard II," Barton dropped a startling tidbit of information. "One of the few facts we're pretty sure of is that Shakespeare's stage was forty-three feet wide," he said, "which is enormous." Nearly as large, in other words, as a Broadway stage. The space had its effect on the staging of relationships and language, which Barton was trying to point out to the banished royals, Kline and Kate Burton, and the political emissary Northumberland, played by Waterston, who comes with the bad



news that the King will be jailed in Pomfret Castle, not in the comparative comfort of the Tower. The momentousness of the separation and the Queen's impassioned monologue prior to Richard's arrival ("This way the King will come, this is the way / To Julius Caesar's ill-erected tower, / To whose flint bosom my condemned lord / Is doom'd a prisoner by proud Bolingbroke") immediately forced the actors together; and Northumberland, too, came into their circle of intimacy to deliver his bad news. "It goes off the boil when it all gets close and too tied up," Barton interrupted. "If you have heightened language and you get on top of each other it can't work. You're in a traffic jam. The instinct to move closer is a modern one and doesn't work." He added, "You have to open up and share the language."

"If you're far enough away, you have to engage the language," Kline said after the next try, with the actors at a greater distance apart, proved a considerable improvement. "If you blow too softly into a sax, you can't hear the notes."

"Heightened language and argument need space," Barton said.

"Also, the public nature of the speaking," Waterston said. "This is for history."

"Very good," Barton said.

Space is also related to what Barton calls "the need to speak." This need, Barton suggests, is what Shakespeare alludes to in Hamlet's acting instruction: "to show . . . the very age and body of the time his form and pressure." "Unless there is a pressure," Barton says, "there isn't a need to speak." During the workshop, Barton quickly tried to wean the actors off their scripts and "share the text" with the audience. The exercise is a way to get the actor to define for himself to whom he is speaking. "I personally believe that it's right ninety-nine times out of a hundred to share a soliloquy with the audience," Barton has written. "I'm convinced it's a grave distortion of Shakespeare's intention to do it to oneself. If the actor shares the speech it will work. If he doesn't it'll be dissipated, and the audience won't listen properly."

All the issues Barton had discussed came together in Othello's monologue,

POSTSCRIPT

BEYOND THE COLOR LINE

ONE recent Saturday morning, several hundred people gathered at that sacred meeting ground the Union Chapel, in Oak Bluffs, to bid farewell to one of the oldest and most celebrated citizens of Martha's Vineyard. Dorothy West, ninety-one when she died, was a novelist, short-story writer, and longtime columnist for the *Vineyard Gazette*, and the last surviving member of the nineteenth-century literary movement known as the Harlem Renaissance. In those days, her writer friends called her "the kid from Boston." The kid from Boston got around: she once roomed with Zora Neale Hurston, was proposed to by Countee Cullen (she declined), and travelled to Soviet Russia with Langston Hughes. She had seen the revolution there, observed its failings, and couldn't be much impressed by the revolutionary posturing of the Black Power era. "Colored people," she defiantly maintained, was the aptest term for people of African descent in the United States, and, as if to testify to her good sense, the faces in attendance at the chapel were of every hue—not just the expected ebony and ivory but siennas, velvety ochres, pinks, and ambers. *Pick up the century?*

Among those present were the performance artist Anna Deavere Smith, the law professor Lani Guinier, and the First Friend, Vernon Jordan. A dozen or so members of the Cottagettes Choir (the Cottagers being a sorority of black women who own homes in Oak Bluffs) delivered a spirited rendition of "I Believe I Can Fly." To its refrain, the congregants waved one arm side to side over their heads in the manner of Holy Ghost sisters in storefront evangelical churches.

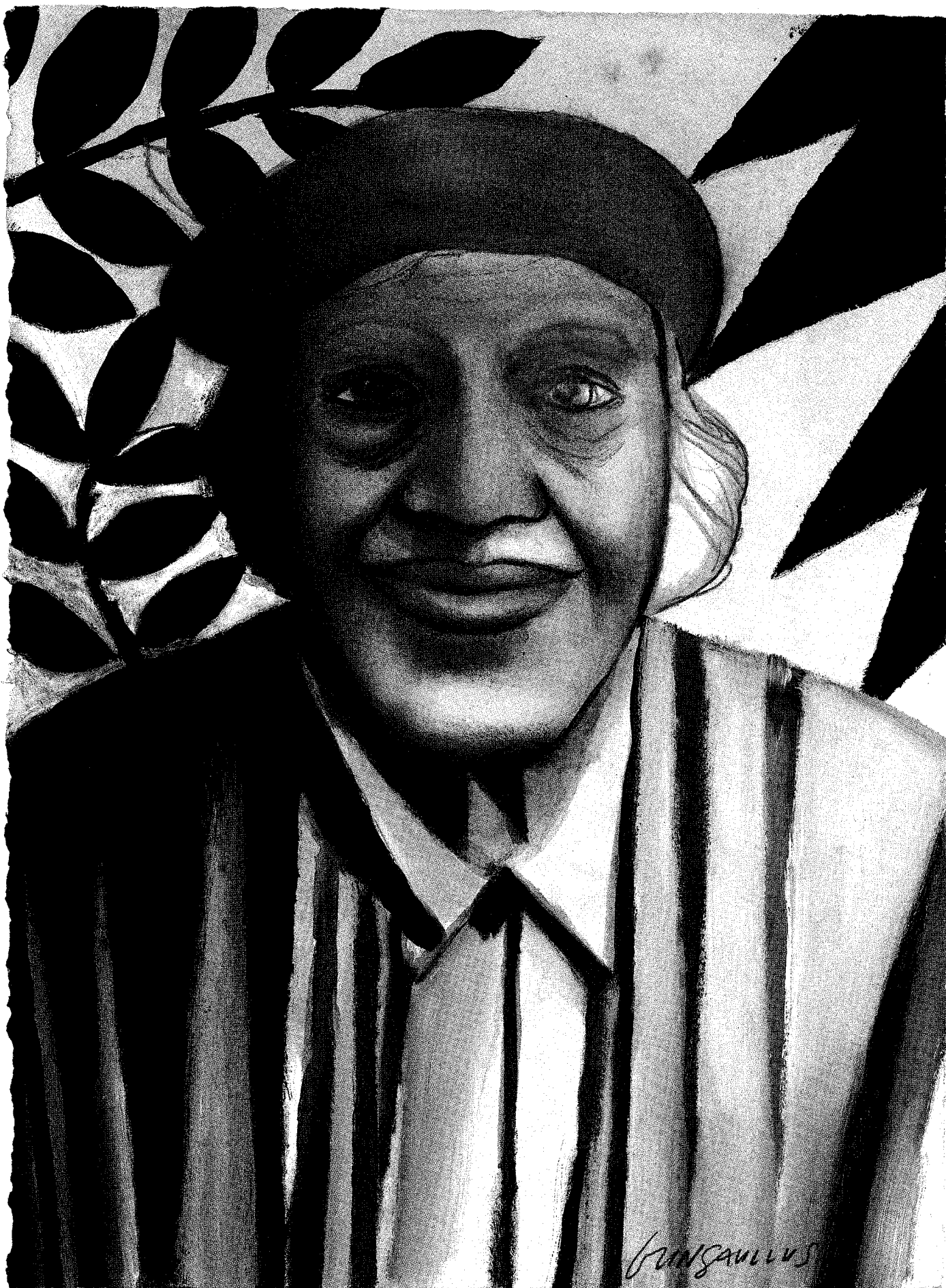
"Color is not important—class is what matters," West was fond of repeating. By "class" she meant those brute inequities that color could so cunningly conceal—but also an old-fashioned sense of decorum, style, and politesse. Her Boston upbringing called for refinement in manner and dress, and a conviction "that propriety was more important than blood," as her cousin

Abigail McGrath put it. One of West's abiding beliefs, McGrath recalled, was that one should "not stay too long at parties, so as to give the impression that you had a better place to go."

McGrath's first marriage helped inspire the plot of West's most successful book, "The Wedding," published in 1995. It tells the story of a daughter of the Vineyard's black elite—*la crème de la crème brûlée*—who scandalizes her family when she decides to marry a penniless white jazz musician. (Oprah Winfrey made it into a two-part movie for television, which was aired last February.)

It took West almost five decades to complete "The Wedding." She had stopped working on the novel at the height of the Black Power movement, in the late sixties, fearing that her views on race would meet a hostile reception from black militants. At the Union Chapel memorial service, the trial lawyer and Harvard Law professor Charles Ogletree recalled asking her why she was afraid of them. "Well," she said, "you know I live alone."

Who could have predicted that the book would have so much resonance in a multicultural America at the end of the century? Part of West's appeal was that she represented a felicitous combination of opposites, as you might expect from a genuine cosmopolitan who made her home on a small island and, in the last half century, seldom left it. Her writing offers both an airy lyricism and a devilish sense of humor. Whether she was working on a short story about a Harlem welfare investigator or a dispatch for the *Vineyard Gazette* about somebody's tea party, she wanted, above all, to get it *right*. To her death, she maintained that the only truthful way to write about black America was as a diversity of colors, of classes, and of sensibilities—united only by a common history and, at times, a common enemy. As a twentieth-century writer, she knew that depicting the lives of colored people with unsparing intimacy, and without ideology or argument, might just be the most revolutionary thing she could do. —HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.



where the Moor decides to kill Desdemona. The first two lines were bedeviling Peter Francis James: "It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul; / Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars, / It is the cause." "I think these two lines are difficult because you're talking to yourself," Barton told him. "Why don't you try using the first two lines to come on with, and then you can face the audience." He paused and continued, "In Elizabethan theatre, they had to bring it on with them. The fact that we don't know quite what you mean makes it dramatic. If someone comes on stage and then contacts us, it's a different chemistry than somebody just talking to himself." James was doing well as he built to the conclusion of the speech:

So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
But they are cruel tears. This sorrow's
heavenly,
It strikes where it doth love.

"Oh God!" James broke off, stunned at the simple revelation that Othello's tear has dropped on Desdemona's sleeping body. "This sorrow's heavenly. It's on her!"

"What did you get from that?" Barton asked him.

"A lot of opportunities," James said.

"If you are aware of the audience, they can do things to you," Barton explained. "When I said, 'Come on,' Peter made the decision to come on quickly. We tend nowadays to be discovered in scenes. The Elizabethans had to come on stage. To potter in, medium tempo, usually doesn't work." Afterward, standing in the late-day sunlight outside, James expanded on the revelations of his lesson: "After speaking to someone in the audience, which actually forced me to cry, because they were in a place that fed me, I looked down at her. I realized that the next line in the text was something I'd never quite understood. It's not about the act he's going to perform ('I'm going to kill her later'). He's simply talking about watching his tears fall and strike his wife. It is literally a stage direction, which is so kind to the actor. He's saying you don't have to act—just talk about what it looks like to have your tear go splat on your wife's face." James concluded, "The hardest thing is to remind yourself of the basics. The heavyweight boxer loses be-

cause he drops his left. Ted Williams loses his swing because he steps in the bucket. The answer is we all step in the bucket. And John goes, 'Don't step in the bucket.' What's so great about him is that you get back to the simple principles. He's coming there from a long route of study."

BARTON's last session, an open lecture attended by the participants as well as by ticket buyers, turned out to be as much an act of drama as an act of exposition. He chose to conclude not with a piece of masterly Shakespearean eloquence but with the strange eloquence of the immigrant Italian anarchist Bartolomeo Vanzetti speaking to the court on behalf of Nicola Sacco and himself just before they were sentenced to death in 1927 for a crime of which the judge who convicted them knew they were innocent. The speech, read by Peter Francis James with a slight Italian inflection, seemed a compendium of many of the strategies Barton's principles had teased out of Shakespeare: the contradictory argument, the need to speak, the passion and coolness of words newly minted in the moment, the power of monosyllables, even the galvanizing sense of whom the speaker is speaking to. But the choice was also a reserved man's signal about his own mysterious and fervent heart. As a coda to the courtroom speech, Barton had added some text from a conversation Vanzetti had with a reporter in his cell a few days after the sentencing. The audience and James's fellow-actors grew silent under the spell of Vanzetti's simple words as the passage reached its peroration:

If it had not been for this thing, I might have lived out my life talking at street corners to scolding men. I might have died unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. This is our career and our triumph. Never in our full life could we hope to do such work for tolerance, for justice, for man's understanding of man, as now we do by accident. . . . Our words—our lives—our pains—nothing! The taking of our lives—lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler—all! That last moment belongs to us—that agony is our triumph.

Barton, who had been leaning against the wall to listen, tottered forward for one last word. His eyes seemed full. "Something poetic happens in him," he said, before dismissing the company. "It's natural in human beings." ♦

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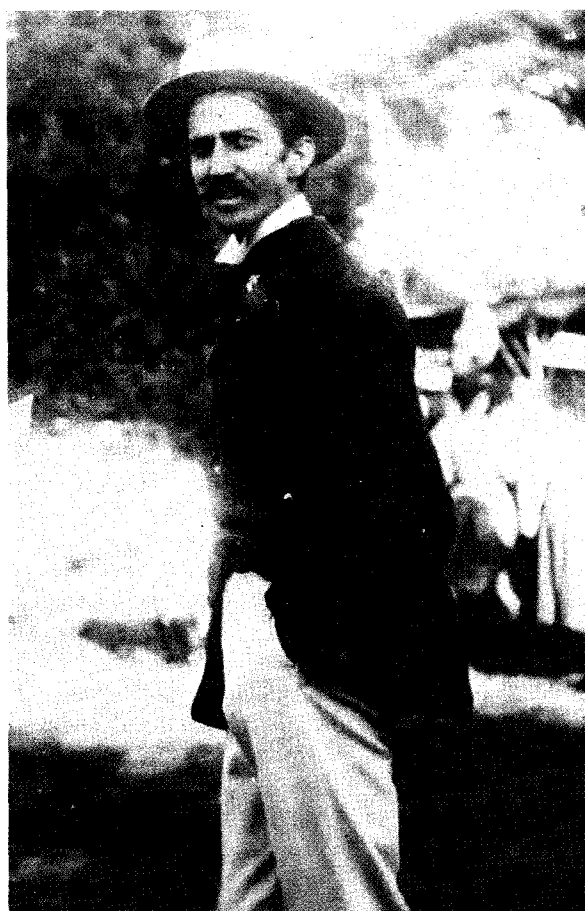
Like his work, Stephen Crane's life reflects a younger, more adventurous America.

BY ROGER ANGELL

IN a letter to his agent, Paul R. Reynolds, in October, 1897, Stephen Crane, the celebrated twenty-five-year-old American author, then resident in England, wrote, "The *Herald* pays me \$100 per article of between 3000 and 4000 words. The *World* has never paid me over \$50 and expenses but could be brought to \$75 or \$100, I think." The mingy sums being offered to perhaps the best-known young writer in the language and the dejected tones in which he discloses them become familiar to readers of Linda H. Davis's "Badge of Courage: The Life of Stephen Crane" (Houghton Mifflin; \$35), the latest biography of a persistently rediscovered author, but that mention of "expenses" fairly leaps from the page. Davis, though she is a demon researcher, offers no examples of the editorial expense account as a turn-of-the-century art form, and it's hard to avoid a gush of sympathy for the bookkeepers when one imagines Crane sorting through a gurry of railroad-ticket stubs, bar chits, telegraph-office carbons, laundry slips (he was known to pencil reporter's notes on his shirt cuffs), customs-clearance receipts, and kennel and stable bills on his desk in preparation for a little swindle-sheet catch-up of his doings over the previous ten months. Rarely idle, Crane, a frail-looking, chain-smoking, boyishly handsome author-correspondent, had gone off to a rebellion in Cuba (well, almost: the boat taking him there sank in a storm); covered a war in Greece; established and furnished a large brick villa in Oxted for an illicit wife; cultivated an array of celebrated literary and artistic friends; and written—amid war dispatches and multiple potboilers—three or four short stories that hold their vigor to this day.

It is tempting to imagine events in such a year as they would appear in that expense account. The popularity of

Crane's short Civil War novel, "The Red Badge of Courage," written when he was twenty-two, had established him unfairly as a young Tacitus, and late in 1896 he left New York for Jacksonville, Florida, in hopes of reporting on a war at first



For a celebrity author, Crane was notably modest: "What I can't do, I can't do at all... I only hold one trump."

hand—an incipiently nasty uprising of Cuban rebels against the Spanish regime. Awaiting passage, he would have kept tabs on his incidental expenses: "Item: Business drinks, dinners, etc., w. Mrs. Cora Ethel Taylor, Hotel de Dream, Jacksonville"—an instant red flag to the accountants, given that the delightful address was that of an upscale bagnio and

the named female its madam. An indignant appeal from Crane just might have won a reprieve, however, when it was backed up with documents showing that the newfound Cora, though plump and married and six years older than he, had become a dependent and, for all practical purposes, his wife.

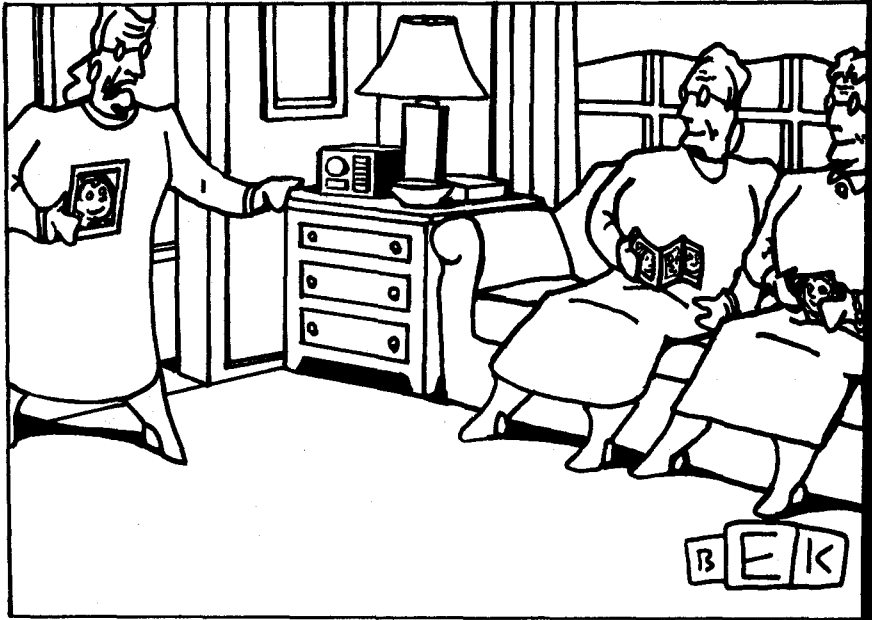
Item 2 on this fancied workup, "Total replacement of wardrobe (shirts, underwear, English riding boots, etc.; see attached list) and correspondent's accoutrements, due to marine mishap," looks bogus, too, but it's absolutely on the up-and-up. Having embarked on the filibustering tug *Commodore*—a privateer, that is—which was smuggling arms and ammunition to the Cuban insurgents, Crane was cast adrift with three others in a ten-

foot dinghy when the vessel went down in a sudden storm, and he staggered ashore on a Florida beach more than a day later, barely alive but in possession of another great story.

Later in the year, Crane, freshly back from a bloody thirty-day Greco-Turkish war, dined in London with a foreign-born novelist: "Item: Oct. 15, 1897: lunch w. Mr. Joseph Conrad / also tea." Lunch and tea? The accountant's pencil pauses, but again Crane is in the clear. Meeting for the first time, the oddly matched authors so enjoyed each other's company that they finished lunch, strolled along Oxford Street, had tea, walked and talked some more, and did not part until eleven that evening. A famous friendship had begun.

But we must put aside our expense sheet, because its columns can't convey

the range of Crane's labors—journalism, stories, novels, poems, anthologies, and floods of hackwork—and because it postpones the inevitable question: Why another Crane biography? I, for one, came to Davis's book with the impression that I already knew enough about her subject: wrote well, died young. I had read the assigned Crane stuff in school:



"Hey, I'll do the kvelling around here."

"Maggie: A Girl of the Streets," a tenement novella (delivered in distractingly literal Bowery-ese) about lives made glum by poverty and booze; some Western tales; and the obligatory "Red Badge of Courage," which presented the soldier's war as one of stupefying boredom interrupted by incomprehensible events and outbursts of terror. Crane's literary reputation rests upon this work, a battle yarn mysteriously transformed into art, but it is a classic that, one also senses, has lost some of its edge to history.

No doubt like other men of my generation, who grew up between the two World Wars, I can recall sometimes thinking back on Crane's battle scenes while I was in college, envisioning myself in the person of the runaway private Henry Fleming, and wondering how I would perform when it came time for me to be in combat. Another war was coming, we all knew that, and we needed to get ready for it. This odd form—war fiction or war memoir as survivors' manual—also included Erich Maria Remarque's "All Quiet on the Western Front," Robert Graves's "Goodbye to All That," and Siegfried Sassoon's "Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man," and, because of the cumulative power and detail of such testimony, the genre outlived the movie transformations (Lew Ayres and Slim Summerville in "All Quiet," in 1930; Audie Murphy in John Huston's "Red Badge," in 1951), and perhaps even the

Second World War itself. With Vietnam, the iconography of war shifted, from the dioramas of artillery destruction and massed bodies to something smaller and more intimately bloody. But if Crane's short masterpiece and his short life (he died of tuberculosis in 1900, at twenty-eight) no longer feel contemporary, Davis has a more stimulating objective than the revival of a literary reputation. It is the man himself who fills up her capacious book. (I append the necessary advisory that a previous book of the author's, "Onward and Upward," was a biography of my mother, Katharine S. White, a longtime *New Yorker* editor and writer.) Although Davis is patient with Crane's great landfills of hackwork and reworked themes—he did "Maggie" over again in the novel "George's Mother," and followed up "The Red Badge of Courage" with a flurry of Civil War tales and sketches—and reflexively overpraises well-known stories like "The Blue Hotel" and "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," she never has cause to inflate the energetic vita itself, which reads like an opera libretto. Quel life!

THE Keatsian glimmer that enfolded Crane after his early death is less interesting than his own aura. Barely matriculating into our century, never able to match the achievement of his sudden first success, he feels locked away within his youth, in an America that has not quite grown up yet, either. This story has

a headlong quality, and although we know its sad ending, Crane remains young and easeful in our imaginations. He was at home, one senses, in a time when the world felt local and intimate, and when journeys tingled with the unexpected. During an extensive trip west in 1895, in search of fresh material ("The Red Badge of Courage" had just come out), he ran into a band of back-country pistoleros in the Mexican desert and was barely rescued by the local cavalry. In Lincoln, Nebraska, he discussed fiction writing with a rising young columnist he had met in the office of the *Nebraska State Journal*, Willa Cather.

It's hard to decide whether it was simply the bustle and optimism of the nineties that hurried Crane along in this fashion or whether he sensed from the beginning that he would need to get on with things. The fourteenth, and last, child of an itinerant New Jersey family much afflicted by death and misfortune, Stephen had been deprived at birth of five predeceased siblings; then lost his father, a Methodist minister, when he was eight; then some in-laws, a beloved sister, his nearest brother (hit by a train), and, at twenty, his mother. In his teens, he was happy at Claverack, a small midstate New York military academy, but he barely looked in at college—a semester at Lafayette, then a shift to Syracuse for a spring term, where he became the catcher on the varsity baseball team and, surprisingly for a freshman, its captain. He was seen reading late at night in his room but did not often attend class. "College life is a waste of time," he told a friend, and then he was gone. Soon employed with the *New York Tribune* as a newspaper-sketch writer and reporter, he gave promise of becoming another barfly journalist-bore—a standard "I want to write" yearner—except that he got the stuff done. In less than two years, he published, under a pseudonym, the brisk, episodic "Maggie," which won the attention of two literary worthies of the era, Hamlin Garland and William Dean Howells, but did not survive for a second printing in its unwatered original form. Seen today, its night atmospherics take on a sepia hue, and its message—bad streets can drive a good girl to the river—arouses only a distracted "Yeah, yeah" in the reader. We might as well be in the book: "Hurrying men, bent on catching some boat or train, jostled her elbows, failing to notice her, their thoughts fixed on distant dinners."

Davis's portrait of the author as a young city-side scribe sticks in the mind. Thin and slight and seedy, with long, nicotine-stained fingers, unkempt blond hair, and striking, almond-shaped blue eyes, Stephen reminded a newspaper colleague, John Northern Hilliard, of another beau ideal of talented infirmity, Robert Louis Stevenson. Like Stevenson, Crane "had a hankering after the women." They hankered back. At twenty, he was proposing elopement to a young married woman, Lily Brandon Munroe, and he professed his love for her again almost two years later. "Don't forget me, dear, never, never, never," he wrote to Munroe, not long before he started passionately courting an Akron beauty, Nellie Crouse—which was shortly before he persuaded Amy Leslie, a well-known Chicago drama critic, into an affair and a shared apartment. This particular romance soon curdled, over a matter of eight hundred dollars, money of hers that Crane carelessly or artfully deposited in his own bank account—a misunderstanding that she eventually took to her lawyers.

The biographer takes much pleasure in this steamy loam, and who can blame her? "I am doomed . . . to a lonely existence of futile dreams," Crane sighs on to Lily Munroe. "It has made me better"—up to a point, Davis need hardly murmur, since Crane, from his earliest days as a night reporter in New York, was a loyal customer and friend of the Tenderloin hookers. Participants in a late-night poker party at his loft on West Twenty-third Street suddenly noticed that a girl had materialized among them, and was fast asleep in his bed. "Gosh!" said the host. "I didn't hear her come in." But Crane wasn't just a ladies' man, it turned out; he was a standup guy, who would take on the New York Police Department over the matter of a prostitute, Dora Clark—he didn't know her—whose wrongful arrest he happened to see on an evening about a year later. He was a celebrity author by then, with "The Red Badge of Courage" being reviewed and discussed everywhere, but there was no cautionary strain in him. Testifying at a departmental trial (the cop was cleared—what else?), he became the subject of embarrassing headlines about his bohemian life style, and, for his pains, won the lifelong enmity of the police commissioner, Theodore Roosevelt.

While visiting the Broadway studio of a painter friend, Corwin Knapp Linson, in

the spring of 1893, Crane had come upon some ten-year-old copies of the magazine *Century* containing a series of illustrated articles about Civil War battles. He studied these closely and returned to them on subsequent visits, sometimes squatting on the floor, Indian style, as he read. The novel, which was initially planned as a potboiler, was well under way by July, and Crane worked at it, mostly by night, for about ten months and then revised it extensively—expenditures of time and patience uncharacteristic of him. First offered to *McClure's Magazine*, whose editors held the manuscript for five months without making up their minds about it, the novella went into newspaper serialization, in butchered form, in December of 1894. The book, price one dollar, was out within a year, and it took off—a best-seller across the country (No. 1 in New York), good for fourteen printings, and a sensation in England.

From the beginning, it appears, it possessed a stand-alone gravity—a presence that protruded upon the literary landscape of its time, and upon its author's life as well. Crane was lucky, I think, because his war story required no extended conversations and no development of character, neither of them being a particular strength of his. Even while he was writing, though, he must have sensed that none of this would matter, for he was on one of those great rolls that every artist yearns for. Davis has found a New York *Times* Civil War short story, "The Coward," which Crane might have seen shortly before he came upon those *Century* copies, and she also offers passages from Tolstoy's "Sebastopol" war essays as a possible inspiration; to Crane, Tolstoy was "the writer I admire most of all." She is not insistent about these sources, however, and a good thing, since the power of "The Red Badge of Courage" comes not from what the author found to put into his thirty-five-thousand-word story but from what he left out. For all its familiarity, this is a defiantly strange work.

When I went back to reread the book not long ago, I was initially annoyed and flummoxed by it, just as I had been the first time around. What *is* this, I thought—I can't follow it. I was back in Crane's war. A neighbor of mine, who, by coincidence, was reading the same book once again, had a similar experience. "I couldn't get it," she said. "It's like Gertrude

Stein." There is a stubborn obliquity to the story, which must still make it a tough sell for tenth-grade English teachers, particularly during that killer winter term.

"The Red Badge of Courage" is about a major battle, possibly Chancellorsville, but it makes no sense of it. Crane's protagonist, Private Henry Fleming, is impressionable and inconsistent. Under fire, he bolts from the field—runs like a rabbit—then finds himself calm and sagacious. He is injured but, shamefully, not by enemy fire, and he is by turns hysterical, enraged, and distant. Grovelling under the tide of battle, he envies the dead but then feels masterful, even heroic. Another infantryman, a tall wounded soldier, is equally odd, suddenly tottering off, away from his companions, and then stopping ("Leave me be—don't tech me—leave me be") as he is invaded by "a creeping strangeness." Then he falls. This is the way movie soldiers die, but Stephen Crane discovered it first. Within its air of alienation and senselessness, the book now presents other such flashes of the secondhand: the clichés of modern battle that it set in motion.

The tale is ironic, but here, again, Crane stays his hand. He is more watchful than angry; his battle is mysterious and terrifying, because it must follow its own course. Like his runaway private, his tone wavers: he is impressionistic, then brutal and direct. He can write, "The trees began softly to sing a hymn of twilight," but can also describe falling troops as "punched by bullets," and he can deliver a side glance at battle which requires only depunctuation to become straight-up Hemingway:

In the rear of this row of guns stood a house, calm and white, amid bursting shells. A congregation of horses, tied to a long railing, were tugging frenziedly at their bridles. Men were running . . .

Crane's view of war looks about wildly, trying to make sense of things. A sergeant shot through both cheeks attempts to cry out, and "in his endeavor there was a dreadful earnestness, as if he conceived that one great shriek would make him well."

CORA TAYLOR, the dreamy madam, enters Crane's own story like a diva on a swan. Blond and short, ample and older, she is too complicated and capable to be easily summarized, and one feels



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Dear Julian, London
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Cheers, - Nigel

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gratitude that Davis makes no attempt to pass her off as Crane's lost mother or as a captured bawd. She and Crane fell in love, and they lived together for the rest of his life. Only the inconvenience of an uncanceled previous husband kept them from marrying, and it decided them to take up residence in England, where their arrangement would be made less of. When, almost at the moment of their arrival, Crane rushed off for that war in Greece, she went along, too, and filed war stuff of her own for the *New York Journal*, under a pseudonym—a Gellhorn in full millinery. Back again in Blighty, she became the keeper of Crane's untidy, work-worn professional career and the golden-haired hostess (sometimes in what looked like "medieval" costume) of a debt-ridden, ramshackle, but wildly attractive literary household. Conrad and his wife and children were constant visitors at the Cranes' home in Oxted, and Ford Madox Ford, the writer Edward Garnett (and his wife, Constance, the Russian translator), and the American novelist Harold Frederic were among those who were invited to dinners and parties and came back repeatedly. Cora was whispered about and sometimes patronized—no one appears to have remembered anything she actually said—but she was an indomitable hostess. And Crane—the lounging, taciturn, famous Yank author, who loved games and played the guitar and told stories about the Greek war with a cowboy drawl—was an exotic attraction, and apparently an irresistible friend. "You are the greatest of the boys," Conrad told him.

Crane and Conrad make an odd couple, starting with the disparity in their ages. Although Conrad was more than a decade older, he was a latecomer as a novelist and looked on Crane as his senior there. (Davis has even found an 1897 *Daily Telegraph* reviewer who took him to task for imitating Crane's manner in "The Nigger of the Narcissus.") Their friendship was literary and artistic, but what Conrad noticed most about Crane he could not imitate—his easy, instinctive way with Borys, Conrad's baby son, for instance (the Cranes were childless), and his surpassing horsemanship. "If you give the boy your seat, I will

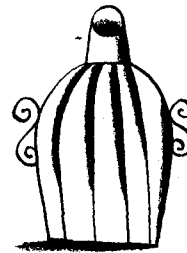
be perfectly satisfied," Conrad told him.

For a celebrity author, Crane was modest about his abilities. "What I can't do, I can't do at all," he said once, "and I can't acquire it. I only hold one trump." To his friend Conrad, Crane was the "complete impressionist." But, in a letter to Garnett, Conrad went further: "While one reads, of course, he is not to be questioned. He is the master of his reader to the very last line—then . . . he seems to let go his hold. It is as if he had gripped you with greased fingers . . . while you feel the pressure on your flesh you slip out from his hand—much to your own surprise."

Davis finds this appraisal unkind, and suspects literary rivalry, but it feels dead-on. At the same time, one can be sympathetic to her loyalty to her subject, who has suffered an author's second-worst fate, a brilliant and unsurpassable early work ("That accursed, damnable book" is how Crane at last thought of "The Red Badge of Courage"), and can perhaps understand her efforts to reverse such a heavy sentence.

CRANE, I think, sustains the level of "The Red Badge of Courage" only in "The Open Boat," the fictionalized account of his experiences after the sinking of the *Commodore*; in a brief, icily ironic Civil War sketch entitled "An Episode of War"; and in an original psychological short story, "The Monster," in which a black man rescues a child from a devastating fire, at the cost of total disfigurement. The first line of "The Open Boat" ("None of them knew the color of the sky") establishes it as something beyond a true tale, and the low, almost monotonous tone of the writing matches the extended anxiety of the castaways, right up to the moment when their dinghy capsizes into the surf: "The coldness of the water was sad; it was tragic. This fact was somehow mixed and confused with his opinion of his own situation, so that it seemed almost a proper reason for tears. The water was cold."

"The Monster" is a small-town story, one of the author's so-called Whilomville series, and Crane lumbers a bit, particularly with his dialogue, while he is setting it all in place. But the obscured, morally transformed, hidden presence of the maimed hero in the later stages—the townspeople can't deal with him,



and want him elsewhere, out of their thoughts—is a sustained modern concept, and a coup.

Davis proposes two celebrated Western stories, "The Blue Hotel" and "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," as abiding works as well, but they may lack weight. The man, to be sure, could flat-out write. In "The Blue Hotel," there's a moment when the players in a card game prepare to step outdoors into a blizzard to fight, and when the door is flung open "some of the scarred and bedabbled cards were caught up from the floor and dashed helplessly against the farther wall. The men lowered their heads and plunged into the tempest as into a sea."

IN the spring of 1898, Crane went off to a last round of battles, the Spanish-American War. Repeatedly in combat, he was cool under fire and watched the Battle of San Juan Hill at close quarters while wearing a white raincoat. He was sneered at then by a rival celebrity journalist, Richard Harding Davis, but later Davis changed his mind and wrote that "in his devotion to duty, and also in his readiness at the exciting moments of life, Crane is quite as much of a soldier as the man whose courage he described." Crane's own prose from the field, one can't help noticing, had got quicker: "These Mauser projectiles sounded as if one string of a most delicate musical instrument had been touched by the wind into a long, faint note."

When the war ended, Crane weirdly disappeared in Havana for a few weeks; then he was glimpsed, very run-down, in cafés and on the street. He was in love again (no one ever found out the name of the woman), but also, one must guess, was not anxious to get home and look at what lay ahead. His tuberculosis had been diagnosed, and his unending debts—he and Cora had left their previous residence with the bailiffs snapping at their heels—continued when they improvidently rented Brede Place, a dilapidated Tudor-and-Elizabethan pile in East Sussex. Once Crane did get home, the dinners and social weekends and parties went on (Henry James bicycled over from Lamb House, in Rye, about once a week), and Crane wrote on incessantly, amid distractions, trying to get out from under: war stories, junior fiction for *Harper's Bazaar*, an abominable novel entitled "Active Service," pieces about the

Boer War, and frantic pleas to his London agent ("My Dear Pinker: I must have the money. I can't get on without it").

Linda Davis's strong suit is accrual, and her readers will feel a great attachment to Crane in her latter glimpses of him: the author rising from his writing desk to let his three dogs into his study, and then, a few minutes later, to let them out again; or H. G. Wells and Conrad and other guests, in their dressing gowns, playing a late-night impromptu concert with comb-and-toilet-paper instruments in the Brede Place pantry while Stephen conducts with a toasting fork. But she is clear about the kind of slave work he was doing at the same time, and at what miserable odds. "In four years," she writes near the end, "Crane had published five novels, two volumes of poetry, three big story collections, two books of war stories, and countless works of short fiction and reporting. And yet in three years he had earned just over \$1,200 for his entire American output." In the meantime, the English sales of "The Red Badge of Courage" had netted him twenty pounds, thanks to an unforgiving contract he had with an American publisher.

He suffered a lung hemorrhage just after Christmas in 1899—he had been staging a musical pageant at Brede Place—but went on working. He died the following June, at the age of twenty-eight. A. J. Liebling, in a piece that appeared in this magazine in August, 1961, wrote that Crane died "unwillingly, of the cause most common among American middle-class males—anxiety about money." It was the money and the skinflint publishers who killed him, Liebling said, just as they had nearly done in Dostoyevsky. Liebling was an admirer of Crane's writing, for its clarity amid the fudgy general run of eighteen-nineties prose—Hamlin Garland, he asserted, "couldn't write for free seeds"—and he concluded that Crane's early death had deprived us of what might have been "the great correspondent that the First World War failed to produce."

Here, and here only, I depart from my wrathful old colleague. I cannot find it in me to wish Stephen Crane still at it in his fifties, caught in a more modern time and forced to write about death on an even more enormous scale. Anyway, he had already told us what a modern battle was like, long before he had to go to one. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

ONCE UPON THE RIVER LOVE, by Andrei Makine; translated from the French by Geoffrey Strachan (Arcade; \$24.95). Can a whole novel be about adolescent boys watching Jean-Paul Belmondo movies through a Siberian winter? Resoundingly, yes. One of the boys has been lamed by ice floes, and another is nearly raped, rendering him permanently pugilistic. The third is our narrator, seeking beauty in the taiga amid the coarseness of Soviet life, and finding it in friendship and French movies. His tale is suffused with the longing of an exile—less because the narrator has left Russia than because every adult is an exile from his youth.

THE RINGS OF SATURN, by W. G. Sebald (New Directions; \$23.95). The author turns his solitary walks (through Waterloo, Amsterdam, the coastal towns of England) into meditations of Borgesian range. A description of an abandoned bridge over the River Blyth occasions the story of the silk-obsessed Tz'u-hsi, Empress of China, which leads, in turn, to the sad end of the excitable poet Swinburne—"whose life was coterminous to the year with that of the Dowager Empress." By such slim threads Sebald weaves his tales together with a complexity and historical sweep that easily encompass both truth and fiction.

SPLIT: A COUNTERCULTURE CHILDHOOD, by Lisa Michaels (Houghton Mifflin; \$23). This account of being raised by sixties radicals may be the best argument for the left since Marx. The facts at first sound otherwise: tot at demo with Vietcong flag loses dad to prison for his antiwar activities, gets dragged around the country with mom's new boyfriend, etc. But the signal fact is that these parents, separated from and resentful of each other, treated their child with the same absolute attentiveness, respect, and unreserved sympathy that they had hoped everyone in the world could share.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF DIPLOMACY, by Jane C. Loeffer (Princeton Architectural Press; \$27.50). The recent bombings in Kenya and Tanzania have endowed this conscientious, illuminating study of the State Department's Cold War building boom with unfortunate topicality. Competing with the Russians, who stuck with Stalinist structures, the Americans opted for modernism; consequently, the book's illustrations are a somewhat damning panorama of yesterday's avant-garde. Since the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, however, art has taken second place to security.

IN THE COUNTRY OF ILLNESS, by Robert Lipsyte (Knopf; \$24). Lipsyte, a veteran sportswriter and city columnist for the *Times*, is also a cancer patient. In his signature voice—clear-headed and astringent—he takes us where we least want to go (the examining room, the hospital ward), and he manages not merely to devise adult strategies of sanity but also to tell the story of almost dying (or surviving for now) with pitiless wit. Here is a narrator who doesn't beg for admiration but earns it all the same.



MUSICAL EVENTS

THE TRAGIC PRANKSTER

Remembering Alfred Schnittke.

BY ALEX ROSS

THE Interfax Russian News Agency recently issued this curious report of a notable death:

Russian composer Alfred Schnittke, who died at 63 of a stroke in Hamburg, Germany, on August 3, was buried Monday at Moscow's Novodevichye cemetery. About 300 people came to the cemetery, but not all were allowed to attend the burial. None of Schnittke's relatives or friends made any speeches or agreed to talk to reporters. Famous Russian cellist and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich said the composer's death was a loss too big to be put into words. "There's nothing else I can say," he added. It started raining when the coffin was being lowered into the grave, which in Russian folklore is a sign that the angels are weeping about the deceased and welcoming him in heaven.

It has an anachronistic air, this bit of news. It reads like the final paragraph of a murky Romantic novel of ideas: first the awkward, silent, rain-soaked scene of the artist's burial, then the abrupt flight toward the mystical. Yet it's all compressed into a magazine-ready sound bite. It is a fitting epitaph for Alfred Schnittke, who struggled to reconcile his sometimes tremendous musical orations with the narrow, rickety platform of contemporary classical music on which he had to speak. He was aware of the potential absurdity of his situation, and he was able to draw a dark, Felliniesque kind of comedy from it. He wrote a Requiem with electric guitars, a Faust scene with cabaret contralto. In his later years, as he was iso-

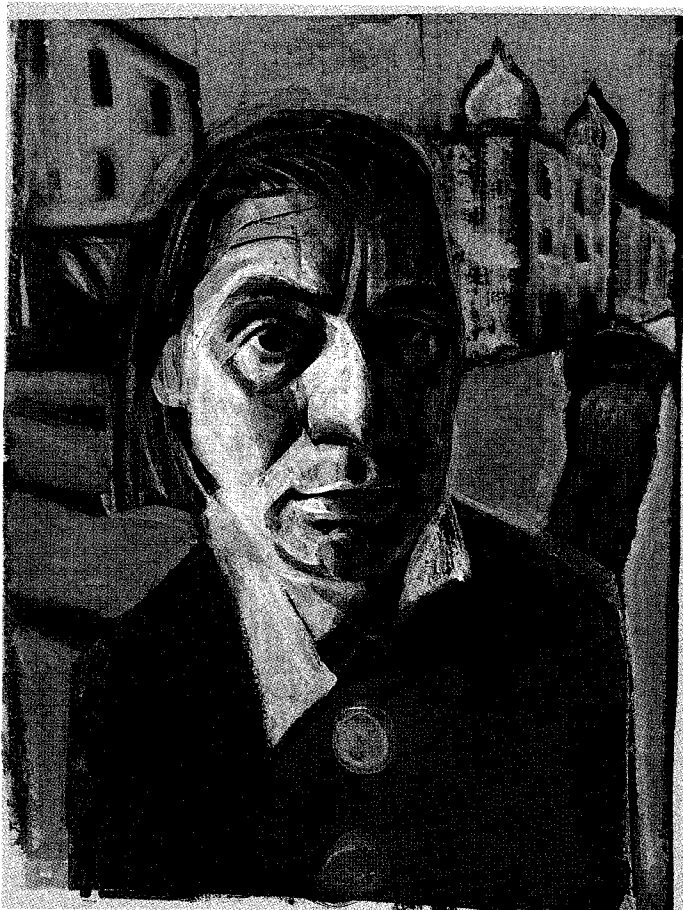
lated by illness, he worried less over the irony of being a Romantic in an un-Romantic time: he aimed for maximum nineteenth-century grandeur, and at certain moments he achieved it. A mocker turned tragedian, Schnittke was the emblematic composer of our time.

Solomon Volkov, in the notes to a new recording by the Kronos Quartet, writes, "Schnittke actually resembled an alien in some ways: his large head, topped with a peculiar hairdo, tilted to one side; his fearful eyes closely set on his pale face, expressive and captivating." That freakish, fragile air was a mask: in private, Schnittke was lively and witty,

and he worked amid a hubbub of family, friends, students, colleagues, and hangers-on. When I interviewed him, in 1994, in Washington, I caught a sense of the brilliant, caustic man behind the monkish façade. He answered questions with a practiced cryptic air, but on the one or two occasions when I accidentally asked something intelligent his eyes opened wide—pleasure combined with ironic surprise. His mind was of the devouring kind. His music had an astonishingly wide frame of reference: each work was an essay on its genre. Yet he was anything but an academic composer. His best pieces had the drama of events unfolding in real time—of human voices speaking, shouting, pausing, remembering, and fading away.

SCHNITTKE was born in Russia, in the city of Engels, but his father was a German-speaking Latvian Jew and his mother was a Volga German. He spoke the antique Volga German dialect before he spoke Russian. As a teen-ager, he spent two crucial years in Vienna, just after the Second World War, while his father was working in the Russian sector of the city. Thereafter, he spoke German with a Viennese accent, and, arguably, composed in Viennese as well. His harmonies had a Mahlerian heft, his melodies a Schubertian lilt; he spun them out effortlessly. But he could not keep the Austrian-Romantic tone pristine. The prototypical Schnittke phrase begins in an innocent, nocturnal-wanderer tone and then is waylaid by dissonances. Like a smearing of paint, suspended tones blacken into clusters. The Vienna in which he came of age was, after all, the bombed-out city of "The Third Man."

Schnittke suffered under the Soviet cultural system, but, as a child of the Khrushchev thaw, he was able to resist its tyrannical idiocies. After a few attempts at socialist-realist bombast, he adopted an idiosyncratic, spiky modernism; then, in the late sixties, he began to write in what he called the "poly-



A post-Romantic Romantic and a ringmaster of musical history.

stylistic" vein—a musical montage technique that blended styles of various eras. The turnabout was influenced not only by the kaleidoscopic musical fashions of the sixties and seventies but also by the experience of scoring films—work that paid the bills whenever the composer fell out of favor with the Soviet classical establishment. In his carnivalesque First Symphony, of 1972, players wander in and out, a jazz ensemble improvises, bits of Tchaikovsky explode and fizzle, and the orchestra collectively delivers itself of dire, deafening minor chords. Schnittke's early symphonies had a huge impact on Soviet audiences of the time: they found the sheer chaos of the sound daring and liberating. Such works are less impressive today: overblown and murky, they all try to do the apocalypse in about an hour.

But Schnittke's stylistic journey was just beginning. In the late seventies, he reined in his quotations and parodies, evolving a more disciplined voice. On a now classic BIS recording—one of many dozens that his music has received—you can follow Schnittke's rapid progression from the madcap, hallucinogenic First Concerto Grosso, written in 1977, to the mature mystery of the Piano Concerto, from 1979, which begins with surreal classical touches and ends with a translucent twelve-tone row. What then came to the fore was Schnittke's identification with the great Austrian tradition that stretched from Mozart to Berg. His approach resembled Shostakovich's: a scholarly devotion shot through with Russian irony and pessimism. There is an old Bachian machine—a broken, tangled chromaticism—at work behind such later masterpieces as the String Trio and the Viola Concerto. They were both written in 1985, just before the first of the strokes that beset Schnittke's final years.

Thomas Mann entitled one of his essays "The Sufferings and Grandeur of Richard Wagner." You could speak without too much exaggeration of the sufferings and grandeur of Alfred Schnittke. Nothing underscores the power of his spirit more than his determination to keep writing music, even when it became almost physically impossible. The stroke of 1985 spurred him on: in the next few years, he wrote music of exceptional lyrical generosity, even of embarrassing kitschiness. After a second stroke, in 1991, he became

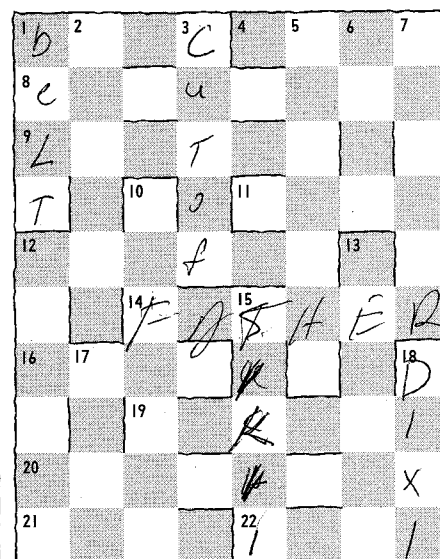
scarily austere. From this period came the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies, which mystified even the composer's fans when they were played within a few days of each other in New York in 1994. He broadened his style again with the Eighth Symphony, allowing himself a few Brucknerian flourishes. In one of his very last works, the "Concerto for Three," he played a joke on his own tragic profile: as the three string soloists throw themselves into a drunkenly racing finale, an anonymous-looking person is directed to get up from the audience and finish off the piece with a dissonant crash on the piano. (EMI's recording of this piece and of the String Trio—both with Mstislav Rostropovich, Gidon Kremer, and Yuri Bashmet—is essential.)

In 1994, Schnittke suffered a third stroke, and it left him unable to speak. He had nearly completed "Historia von D. Johann Fausten," his long-awaited opera based on the original, sixteenth-century Faust tale. He went on composing, but turned his attention to the ominous task of writing a Ninth Symphony. Gennady Rozhdestvensky attempted to conduct the nearly illegible manuscript of the Ninth in Moscow last June, with reportedly confusing results. The Faust opera, too, remains in limbo. I heard a version of it in Hamburg in 1995, and came away both thrilled and disappointed: it seemed that Schnittke had fallen short of the summary Faust work that he had been seeking. The final act, in which Faust is eviscerated to the tune of a remorseless tango, is a tour de force, but the remainder is sketchy.

The masterpiece of Schnittke's last years will probably be the symphonic ballet "Peer Gynt," which runs the full Faustian gamut of ambition, destruction, and redemption. As Ibsen's hero is crowned Emperor of the World by a mob of lunatic philosophers, a magnificent yet not quite believable theme rises in the brass and shatters into piercing fragments. The theme returns, ennobled, in the closing Adagio, "Out of the World." That is the music that went through my head when I heard that Schnittke was gone. There are many brilliant composers in our midst, but I wonder how soon we will feel again the rush of emotion that a new work of Schnittke's used to bring: the promise, sporadically fulfilled, of the sublime. ♦

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REVIEWS IN BRIEF: DIANA BOOKS

BY CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

That'll Be Ten Pounds by Earl Spencer

Diana's brother reveals that just before her death she told him that if anything happened to her he should build a gift shop in her memory at Althorp, the family estate, so he "wouldn't ever have to do an honest day's work." He writes, "We spent many happy hours together deciding how much to charge for souvenir mugs and T-shirts." He hopes to be able to accommodate three times as many visitors next year, but complains that the local council authorities "are being damned shortsighted about the need for more public loos."

First serial: Country Life; author tour.

Chicken Soup for the Diana-Lover's Soul: 101 Inspirational Stories to Make the Authors of the Chicken Soup Series Even Richer Than They Already Are edited by Jack Canfield

This collection, the seventy-eighth in the successful series, includes a wide range of heartwarming stories: a teenage boy learns to channel his anger into more positive pursuits after being sent to prison for stomping on a few freesias that were lying around outside Kensington Palace not doing anybody any good anyway; a rich, aimless woman finds the fulfillment that eludes her in marriage by going on "the mother of all shopping sprees"; a businessman, moments before his car plows head on into the Arc de Triomphe, hears empty Pernod bottles rattling around in the front seat next to the chauffeur and decides to buckle his seat belt.

One Spirit Book Club main selection.

Royal Warrant by Mohammed al-Fayed

The author, father of Dodi, claims to have "solid evidence"—never really

specified—that his son and the Princess were murdered by MI-6, the British Secret Service, on orders from the Royal Family. Al-Fayed alleges that the Windsors wanted to avoid paying the three hundred and twenty-seven million pounds in charges at Harrods—which he owns—that Diana accumulated during her marriage to Charles. "They are cheap, very cheap," he writes, "always coming in and asking for reductions." The chapter about how Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, was responsible for the mad-cow-disease epidemic in Britain seems somehow off the point here.

Film rights to Oliver Stone.



Thanks a Bunch, Luv by Camilla Parker Bowles

A remarkably candid memoir by the infamous third person in the marriage between Prince Charles and Diana, in which she confesses to "mixed feelings at best" about the events of last August. Camilla was on the verge of being accepted by the British public as the Prince's consort when the accident occurred, postponing an open liaison, perhaps indefinitely. (According to a recent poll, ninety per cent of Britons wish it had been Camilla in the tunnel with

an Egyptian playboy instead of Diana.) Taking pains to be polite, the author notes that "Diana wasn't quite as dim as everyone said," and compliments the Princess on her "rather neat" handwriting.

Liberté, Égalité, DNA by Barry Scheck

Scheck, the lawyer who helped acquit O.J. Simpson, was hired by the family of Henri Paul, the chauffeur who was driving on the night Diana was killed. They were convinced that the autopsy results showing that Paul's blood-alcohol content was three times the legal limit had been doctored to deflect blame from the real culprit: L.A.P.D. detective Mark Fuhrman. Scheck obtained an order to exhume Paul's body from a cemetery in Brittany. His conclusion? "He didn't look drunk to me."

First serial: Vanity Fair.

"Looking at Myself in the Mirror": Celebrities Talk About Where They Were When They Heard the News by the editors of *US Magazine*

The title, from Donald Trump's answer, pretty much explains the basic idea. Trump calls Diana a "world-class princess," and says that he and Diana were "really close," despite the fact that they spent only a few minutes together, in a Plaza Hotel elevator. "The real tragedy," he says, "is that she never got to experience the Royal Suite at the Taj Mahal casino." Calista Flockheart wept because Diana would never get to see the "Baby Chacha" episode on "Ally McBeal." And Tom Cruise fondly remembers meeting Diana after an Elton John concert and telling her "how amazing it was that so many letters of her name appeared in the word Dianetics," the philosophy of the Scientologist L. Ron Hubbard. ♦

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